

PLUCK AND LUCK

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No. 144.

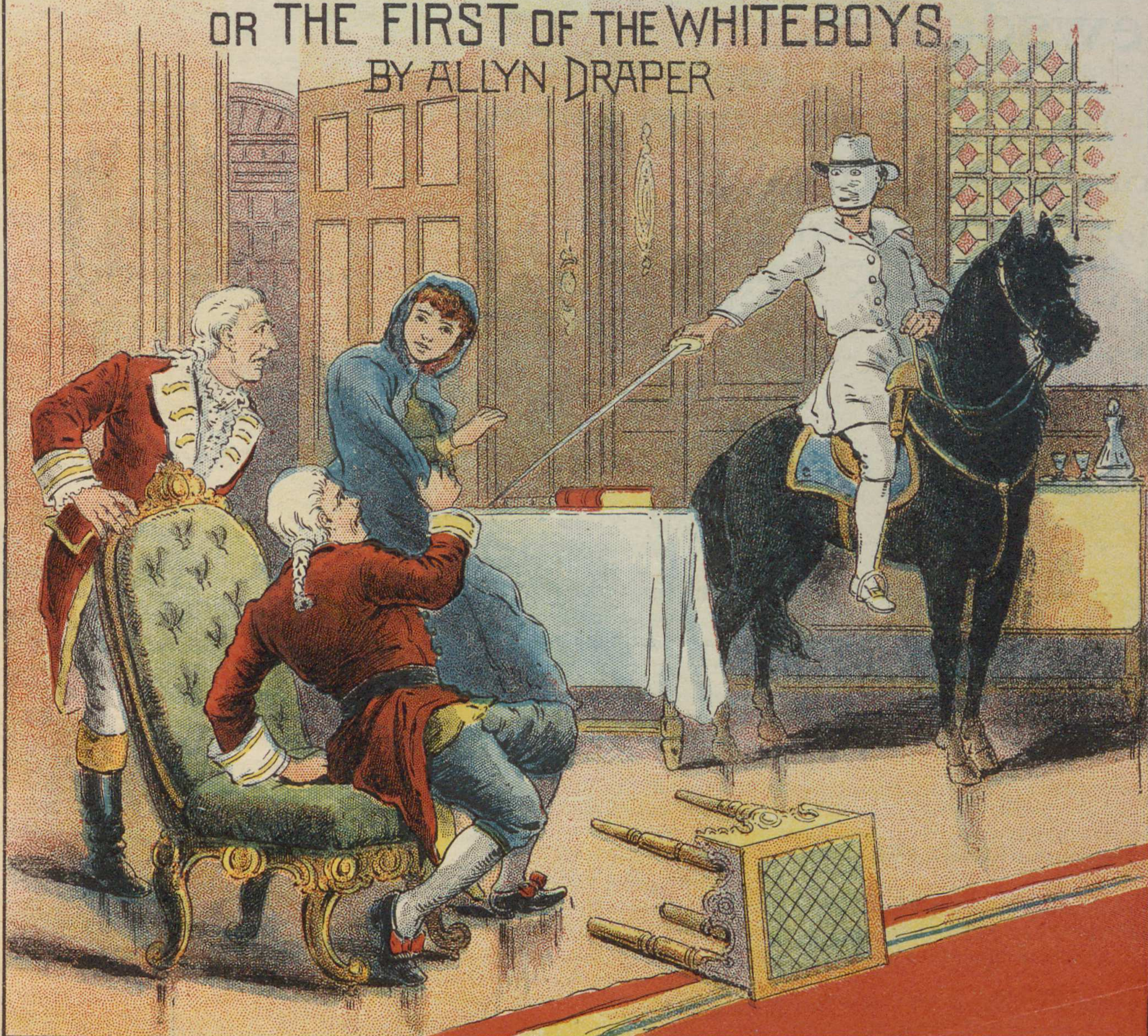
NEW YORK, MARCH 6, 1901.

Price 5 Cents.

YOUNG CAPTAIN ROCK,

OR THE FIRST OF THE WHITEBOYS.

BY ALLYN DRAPER



The tall white figure on the black steed appeared like a marble statue. Captain Rock raised his sword and pointed it at Colonel Tallon as he cried: "I came back for the young lady, unless she desires to remain under your protection."

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PLUCK AND LUCK.

Complete Stories of Adventure.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York, N. Y., Post Office, November 7, 1898. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1901, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, 24 Union Square, New York.

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CHAPTER I.

THE FRIAR AND THE REDCOATS

This story treats of the most stirring and sanguinary rebellion that ever occurred in Ireland, and the hero was a character well known in history and in romance.

There is scarcely an intelligent Irishman living to-day who has not heard or read of Captain Rock, yet very few can tell his real name or give an account of his early life.

He was a mystery to his friends as well as to his enemies, and he flitted from place to place with his band, to succor or to attack as the humor moved him.

The daring man would also travel alone, acting as a spy or a scout for the patriot army, and he was often known to penetrate into the English garrison in disguise, and thereby learn the secrets of the officer in command.

It is the custom in Ireland during the time of the war to billet the soldiers and officers of the English army on the people of the country, and each Irish family is compelled to give food and lodging to a certain number of the enemy.

When the English soldiers were thus put on the warpath they treated the helpless citizens with the greatest barbarity, using insult, fire and sword for little or no provocation.

On a certain morning in the spring of the year a company of English dragoons rode into the village of Lisleen, which was situated at the foot of Wicklow Mountains, not many miles from Dublin.

Captain Graham, who was in command of the company, soon announced that the officers and men of the troop would live on the inhabitants of the village for some days at least, as they were in quest of the famous Captain Rock, who was supposed to be concealed in the neighboring mountain.

On the evening of the same day a tall man in the garb of a friar was kneeling at a grave in the village churchyard, when a rough country lad of eighteen approached the spot and addressed him in the most respectful tones, saying:

"Good father, the hounds are out."

The friar arose from the grave, cast a cautious glance around, and then addressed the lad in kindly tones, as he replied:

"I know that, Barney. How many of them are at the house?"

"Captain Graham and two of his officers, sir, but there's eight of the thieves in the next house, and the rest are within call all over the village."

"That's nothing, my lad, I will call up in time for supper."

"Murder alive, sir, but they will take you and hang you on the nearest tree."

"I suppose they would if they knew me and they happened to be able. Come now, Barney, I'd like to know if you would know me if I had not told you who I was to-day?"

The lad cast a glance down at the grave, as he replied:

"On my faith, I wouldn't know you, sir, no more than the man in the moon; but if any of the rogues of the village saw you kneeling at the grave here they might suspect something and tell the redcoats some news."

"Let them suspect and tell what they please, Barney. I am going to sup with Mr. Barrington this evening, and I am going to give those insolent officers a lesson as well."

"More power to you, sir, if your mind is made up, and count on us in the bargain," said the lad, as his eyes sparkled with humor.

"I do count on you and your sister, my brave lad, and now listen to a few instructions."

The friar then drew Barney under the shade of a willow tree and spoke to him in earnest tones for some moments.

When the lad was about to leave the stranger, the latter pointed to the grave, as he said in bitter tones:

"You know who lies buried there, Barney, and never forget that I am called upon to avenge his death. Go now and look for me."

The lad hastened to one of the largest houses on the outskirts of the village, and the friar knelt at the grave again, while he muttered to himself:

"When I think of what I was and what I am, I almost forget that I am a Christian."

Mr. Barrington was one of the leading citizens of the village, and he was the owner of three well-cultivated farms in the valley.

Although not openly opposed to the British government, it was suspected that he was in full sympathy with the Irish patriots who were then in arms in the neighboring mountains.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening when the three English officers quartered on the good farmer entered his house, the captain crying:

"Now for a good supper, and then for a night of it at the rebel's expense."

Captain Graham was a stout man of thirty-five, and of medium height, with a countenance denoting greed, evil passions, and a desire for good living.

His two lieutenants were wild, dashing young fellows from London, who believed, with their captain, that it was the right thing to plunder, insult and kill all the rebel Irish they encountered during the campaign.

The farmer's family consisted of his wife and two children, together with Barney O'Brien and his sister—a girl of sixteen—who acted as confidential servants in the family.

Julia Barrington was a charming girl of eighteen, and her brother Ned was a spirited, active lad of sixteen.

The unwelcome guests had scarcely entered the house during the day when the good farmer and his wife felt that they were bent on mischief, and the uneasy feeling was increased in the evening when it was perceived that the boisterous officers had been drinking.

Mrs. Barrington was about to send Julia on a visit to a relative in a neighboring village, when the friar entered the kitchen and held up his hand in warning to the anxious woman, as he said to her:

"Let your daughter remain where she is, and I will protect her."

Although the friar was a stranger, a few more sentences

from him convinced Mrs. Barrington that he would keep his word, and Julia remained in her father's house.

When supper was announced Captain Graham and his companions were surprised to see the tall friar take his place at the table.

The presence of the stranger, however, did not seem to check the spirits of the gay soldiers, as they indulged in very rude jests at the expense of the farmer and his family, while they kept denouncing the Irish rebels in the strongest language possible.

Even the silent old friar received a good share of the insults of the tipsy officers, to the rudest of which he paid no attention.

After supper a large bowl of punch was introduced, Mrs. Barrington and her son and daughter retiring from the dining room at the same time.

Captain Graham became more excited on partaking of the punch, and when the name of Captain Rock was mentioned by one of the young officers, he exclaimed:

"We'll have the rebel hound and his followers in our clutches in a few days, and then we'll hang the rascal to the nearest trees without trial."

"Who is this Captain Rock?" asked the friar, speaking for the first time.

"A common, low robber, who is sheltered by the rebels around here."

As the brutal captain made answer he cast a significant glance at the good farmer who was entertaining him at the time in the most hospitable manner possible.

"What crime has this outlaw committed?" again asked the old friar.

"Crimes enough to hang a hundred rogues," answered the captain. "His very face would condemn him, as he is one of the vilest-looking dogs unhung to-day."

"It is very strange," remarked the friar, in calm tones, "how people will differ. As I traveled along here from Dublin I met some respectable persons who spoke of this rebel as a handsome, brave young man, generous and warm-hearted to his friends, and even merciful to the enemies who fall into his power."

"A pack of infernal rebel lies, sir," cried Captain Graham, in a half-drunken rage. "The knave is an ugly, sneaking brigand, and I would venture to put him and his cowardly band to flight with only two of my officers here if they would only dare to meet us on highway or byway, by night or by day."

The old friar smiled under his hood, as he quietly rejoined:

"As I am about to pay a visit to this Captain Rock on the mountain, I will take pleasure in tendering him your challenge."

"What!—are you about to pay a visit to the sneaking rebel?"

"I hope to, sir."

"Do you know where he is now lurking?"

"I think I can find him, sir."

The captain sprang up from the table with a merry chuckle and gave a wicked glance at the old friar, as he cried:

"Then, by all that's wicked, you will guide us up to the rascal's lair, or we will string you up on the nearest tree, friar! We will set out this very hour."

The friar did not appear in the least alarmed, as he calmly replied:

"It may not be necessary to seek Captain Rock in the mountain, as he may be down here in the village this very night."

"Ridiculous! The cowardly rascal would not dare to venture near us."

The old friar rose to his full height and drew a pistol from under his frock, as he thundered forth:

"Foolish braggart, I am Captain Rock, and you are all my

prisoners. Raise a hand and you are dead men. See my companions!"

As the outlaw spoke he pointed one hand at the door while he presented the pistol at the astonished officer with the other.

Two persons stood at the door of the room pointing pistols at the other two officers, while Captain Rock continued:

"You see my Whiteboys are on hand, my valiant gentlemen, and we are here to baffle you in a villainous and cowardly plot. Captain Graham, I will bind your arms. Speak a loud word, or make the least resistance, and I will blow your brains out on the instant."

Captain Rock then drew a long cord from over the frock around his waist and proceeded to bind the valiant captain, while he continued:

"You brave gentlemen came here as the guests of this honest man, while you were prepared to deal with him in the most treacherous manner. Please read that aloud, Mr. Barrington."

As the outlaw spoke he drew a paper from the captain's pocket and flung it across the table to the farmer.

As the farmer read the following document aloud a fierce expression appeared in the eyes of the outlaw, while the three officers became deadly pale:

"The destruction of the arch-rebel Henry Barrington is necessary, and you are ordered to put the sentence in force as soon as possible and in the most effective manner.

"Use bullet and steel on himself and his family, let the flames devour his houses, and spare his daughter only, whom you will bear to my mansion near Ross.

"You can easily arrange it so that the acts will be attributed to Captain Rock and his followers, who are lurking in the mountains in the neighborhood at present, and you can then start out to destroy the outlaws as if fearfully incensed at their fresh outrage.

"Tallon."

The good farmer gasped for breath as he read the fearful order, and then fell back on his chair, staring at the captain, as he cried:

"Oh, you fiends incarnate! You came here as my guests, and you meant to assassinate us all except my dear girl. I have not been a rebel before, but I will be one now, and I will fight your cruel government to the death. Captain Rock, I will be one of your Whiteboys."

"So will I, father," cried young Ned Barrington from the hallway.

"And I am one already," cried one of the sentinels at the door, who wore a white shirt over his upper garments, with a mask of the same color covering his face.

Captain Rock laughed at his three prisoners in the utmost scorn as he cried:

"Let these gallant officers see who you are, my friends. Captain Graham boasted that he would put us all to flight with his two officers if he met us on highway or byway by night or by day, and I want to show him that he has been taken by me with the sole assistance of a poor servant lad and his sister. Come in."

The two sentinels advanced into the room, removing their masks at the same time, and the gallant officers then recognized the country lad and his young sister, who had been waiting on them during the meal.

Pointing to the official order which the good farmer still grasped, Captain Rock cast another fearful glance at his prisoners, while he exclaimed in furious tones:

"And so you would lay the blame of your treacherous work on my shoulders? More than half of the vile outrages committed in Ireland are the work of the English soldiers, and yet my Whiteboys are blamed for them all. I will now take you

up to the mountain, where you will receive the punishment you so justly deserve, and I can assure you that your colonel, who wrote that infamous order, will not go unpunished, either."

"Take us up to the mountain," cried Captain Graham, with a sneer. "Daring rebel, you seem to forget that I have eighty armed men under my command in this village."

"I have but half the number at my call," answered the outlaw, "and yet I will scatter your force ere morning. When soldiers are engaged in such treacherous work, they will receive no mercy at my hands. Gag the prisoners, Barney."

The three officers were silenced on the instant, not one of them daring to send forth a single cry of alarm to arouse the dragoons who were within call.

CHAPTER II.

THE WHITEBOY AND HIS BLACK HORSE.

Flinging aside the friar's frock, the gray wig and false beard, the outlaw appeared as a well-to-do young countryman of twenty-one, with tidy knee-breeches and leather leggings, a tight-fitting body coat and a low felt hat.

Having secured the prisoners in the strongest room in the house, the outlaw gave some instructions to the farmer and his son, and he then sallied out to the village tavern with Barney.

On entering the public house they found the tap-room crowded with half-tipsy dragoons, who were drinking at the expense of the poor landlord, whom they threatened with death as a rascally rebel if he offered the least objection to their demands for drink.

When Captain Rock entered the tavern he held a blackthorn stick in his hand, and he slipped up to the bar with Barney O'Brien without attracting much attention at first.

The rough lad stole into the hallway as the outlaw was calling for a drink in quiet tones, speaking in the Irish tongue.

The landlord started slightly on hearing his guest, and he then scowled around at his unprofitable visitors, as he whispered back in the same tongue:

"May it soon poison the villians, as they are drinking me out of house and home, and I know they'll end up by killing me and burning the house over my head."

"Why don't you give them a good dose in earnest, then?"

"Faith, but I would if I had it, captain agra, if I was to die for it."

"Barney has a bottle out in the hallway that will put them all into a sound sleep in a short time, Mike. About six or seven drops to each, and they'll be asleep on the floor," said Captain Rock, with a significant glance at the landlord.

A wicked grin appeared on the face of the man as he asked:

"Will it put them asleep forever, captain?"

"Not it. Although they may deserve it."

"As you say, captain; but 'tis I wouldn't scruple to finish the dogs, as I know they mean death and destruction to all of us."

The landlord slipped out into the hallway, and he was soon back again, dealing out beer and whisky to his threatening customers.

Captain Rock was some minutes after in the act of drinking a pewter of ale at the side of a bar, when a sergeant of dragoons approached him, saying:

"Why, my lad, you are a strapping fellow, and you should be a dragoon."

"Begor, soldier, but I'd like to be one," was the simple answer, "for it must be fine to eat and drink of the best without paying."

"It is, lad, and you will be one of us. Fine clothes to wear, a good horse to ride, plenty of the best to eat and drink, and nothing to do but to charge on a few miserable rebels now and then. Will you join us?"

Captain Rock saw that the drug was working on all those present, who were drinking as fast as the willing landlord could fill out.

The sergeant held a mug of ale in his hand as he addressed the outlaw, who could see that the fellow would soon be overpowered.

Winking slyly at the soldier, the countryman drew back a step or two, as he answered:

"Bedad, I'd join you and willing, my man, if I wasn't already engaged."

"Engaged where?"

"On the other side, to be sure."

"You blasted idiot, do you mean to tell me that you are out with Captain Rock?"

"I am Captain Rock himself, you drunken fool," cried the outlaw, as he struck the sergeant with his blackthorn and sent him reeling on the floor.

Striking right and left at the half-dazed dragoons, who were reeling or stretched asleep around the room, the daring man gained the door of the tavern, as he again cried:

"Yes, I am Captain Rock, and I defy you all to take me."

The outlaw then sprang on a powerful black horse which Barney held outside the door, and he galloped through the street of the village, as he kept yelling:

"I am Captain Rock, and I defy the redcoats! Who will follow me to the mountain?"

There was scarcely a dragoon in the village that night who was not under the influence of liquor, yet about a dozen of them rushed to the stables for their horses on hearing the defiance of the outlaw, while the bugler sent out the cry, calling:

"To horse—to horse!"

When Captain Rock reached the end of the village about thirty of his mounted followers dashed out from a wood to meet him, and he then turned his black charger to dash back at their head, as he yelled out:

"Charge on the English hounds and don't spare them, as they came here to rob and to slay!"

All of Captain Rock's followers wore loose white shirts and masks, and as they thundered through the village they appeared like so many messengers of death, while their ringing war cries appeared to issue from several hundred throats.

Before any of the amazed dragoons could mount and form that ghostly band swept on them with pistol, sword and pike.

Several of the redcoats were slain as they issued from the houses of the villagers, others were attacked and overpowered as they attempted to ride from the stables, while nearly all those in the tavern were made prisoners and secured while they were insensible.

In less than half an hour after the sudden attack was made seventy-five of the dragoons were either killed or captured, with their horses and arms, and only five of them escaped from the village on foot, to be afterward taken by the Whiteboys lying in wait on the roads outside.

As the leader of the band rode away from the tavern, he drew a white shirt and mask from his saddle-bag and slipped them on, so that when he rode back to the attack with his followers he could only be recognized by his tall form, the black steed, and the loud commands that fell from his lips, as he directed his men in the brief struggle.

When all the prisoners were secured in the tavern, Captain Rock sent for the three officers, who were dragged to the place by Barney and five of the Whiteboys.

Captain Graham and the two officers had heard the warlike shouts in the village, and they fully expected that the dragoons

would cut the daring Whiteboys to pieces, but they were amazed and terror-stricken when they reached the tavern.

Captain Rock was mounted on his black horse in the large tap-room, around him were grouped about twenty of his Whiteboys, while the prisoners were stretched on the floor and packed close together.

Pointing to the helpless dragoons, Captain Rock addressed their officer, crying:

"Captain Graham, you came here to insult, burn and slay, and to capture and to hang my band, and there is the consequence. You have orders to bear a certain young lady to your colonel's mansion, and you must obey."

The captain stared at the outlaw as if he did not comprehend him, and he then asked:

"What do you mean, Captain Rock?"

"I mean that you will bear the young lady to Colonel Tallon as ordered. Now away with the prisoners to the mountain. Captain Graham, I did intend to punish you for your vile intentions here, but I deem it just to strike at your master."

Every cart in the village was soon employed in bearing the helpless prisoners to the mountain, while those who were not under the influence of the drug were compelled to walk.

On the following morning Henry Barrington hastened to Dublin in disguise to dispose of his farms, while his young son became enlisted in Captain Rock's band.

Before another troop of soldiers could be sent to persecute the worthy farmer he had disposed of all his property, his wife had found a refuge in a distant town, and Julia Barrington sought a home in the mountain with her young brother, the faithful servant girl bearing her company.

Barney O'Brien was the only one in the farmhouse who had recognized Captain Rock that night, as the outlaw leader did not remove his disguise until just before hastening to the tavern.

CHAPTER III.

YOUNG CAPTAIN ROCK AND HIS WHITEBOYS.

The Whiteboys of Ireland were the most active and persistent enemies of the British government and the landlords.

They took their name from the fact that they always wore white shirts and masks when out on their midnight expeditions, and they were principally recruited from the farmers and their sons and laborers, who had suffered persecution at the hands of their merciless tyrants.

At the time of which we write, martial law was in full force in the counties around Dublin, and bands of dragoons and mounted yeomanry were scouring the country in search of the outlaws and their friends, while the large towns were garrisoned by strong forces of regular English army, under the command of their best officers.

When a poor peasant was caught out at night without a pass from the officers commanding the district he was shot or hung without the least form of a trial, and those who were seized in their homes with arms in their possession met with the same fate.

The principal patriot army was organizing in the Wexford Mountain, awaiting arms from France to sally down on the English foe.

While the patriot army was thus drilling and waiting for arms, several bands of daring outlaws kept harassing the English outposts and made attacks on the houses and store-rooms of those who favored the foreign government.

Young Captain Rock was the most active leader in the partisan warfare, and as his followers were well drilled and armed, he had already succeeded in baffling or defeating several strong parties sent out to crush him.

The Whiteboy leader was a mystery to his friends and foes.

Some declared that he was a young Irish officer who had served in the French army, as his followers were drilled with the precision of veterans.

Others surmised that he was a deserter from the English army, as he often passed into the garrison in the garb of an officer or that of a common soldier.

While more were wont to declare that he was the son of a famous Irish patriot who had been put to death by the English.

Barney O'Brien knew the history of the famous young man, and the simple country lad was not likely to betray the secret of one whom he regarded with the utmost veneration.

Captain Rock was in the habit of performing the most extraordinary feats while working against his foes, and even those who were closest to him were sometimes of the opinion that he acted like one who was not always sane.

On the night after the attack on the dragoons, Colonel Tallon, who was in command of the military district near the town of New Ross, was spending the evening at his country seat with some friends, when the bell rang, announcing visitors.

A few minutes after a male servant entered the dining room and approached the colonel to whisper some words into his ear.

Making an excuse to his guests Colonel Tallon hobbled from the room.

He was suffering from the gout, and he walked with much difficulty, yet his friends noticed that he made undue haste as he left the room.

Hastening down to the drawing room as well as he could, the excited man hailed Captain Graham anxiously, as he inquired:

"Well, what success at Lisleen? Who have we here with you?"

The colonel stared at a tall man in the garb of an English officer and a veiled woman, both of whom were standing near the door with Captain Graham.

"This is the young lady you ordered me to bring here, colonel," answered the captain, "and this gentleman is an officer of the Irish army who insisted on accompanying us."

Colonel Tallon was a pompous, fiery person of forty, and he grew red in the face as he stared at the stranger and then at Captain Graham, as he spluttered out:

"What silly jest is this, sir? An officer of the rebels here, and in that uniform!"

The stranger stepped toward the excited colonel as he said, in calm tones:

"It is true that I am an officer in the rebel army, sir, and I came here to make an exchange of prisoners, as well as to escort this young lady back to her friends when she has learned from you your object in ordering her to be brought here by Captain Graham."

"What insolence is this, Captain Graham?" demanded the local tyrant. "Is this person Miss Barrington, the daughter of the rebel?"

The young woman flung back her veil, and her dark eyes flashed with indignation as she fixed them on the excited colonel, saying:

"Yes, Colonel Tallon, I am the daughter of that Henry Barrington whom you have been persecuting for years, and whom you ordered to be assassinated with his family last night. I think you remember me."

Before the perplexed colonel could reply Captain Graham claimed his attention by seizing his arms and crying out, in excited tones:

"Colonel Tallon, you have a traitor in your midst. I was

assailed last night by Captain Rock in the village of Lisleen, and my whole force was either slain or captured. The order you gave me was taken from me ere I could destroy it."

"This is incredible, sir."

"It is the truth, however, and here is Captain Rock, the leader of the band of rebels who took me prisoner."

Colonel Tallon glared at the famous rebel, and his voice was husky with surprise and rage as he exclaimed:

"You Captain Rock, and here in my house, where I have a guard of fifty dragoons!"

"What of that, Colonel Tallon?" quietly demanded the outlaw. "I came here to negotiate for an exchange of prisoners, and——"

"You came here to be hung, you insolent rebel!" cried the enraged colonel, as he attempted to hobble to the bell rope.

"Stay, colonel, I beg you!" cried Captain Graham, seizing his superior officer, and holding him back. "Remember that Captain Rock holds sixty of my men as prisoners, and they will be all put to death if——"

"I will have him hung on the instant if he held five hundred of the king's best troops at his mercy," cried the tyrant, as he struggled to reach the rope.

The Whiteboy leader advanced a few steps and presented a pistol at the head of the master of the house, as he said, in calm tones:

"If you raise an alarm, sir, I will blow your brains out. Be calm and tell us what your object was in sending for Miss Barrington."

The pistol at his head served to calm the excited man, and while he blared at Captain Rock with angry eyes, he replied:

"The young lady is not a daughter of the rebel Barrington, and I am her lawful guardian. Why are you here if you are really Captain Rock, which I cannot believe?"

"I am here, Colonel Tallon, to know if you will negotiate for an exchange of prisoners and to protect this young lady. Miss Barrington, had you any idea that Henry Barrington was not your real father?"

"I know that Mr. Barrington is not my real father," replied the young girl, "but I utterly disown any right on the part of Colonel Tallon to be my guardian."

"We will see—we will see, girl," cried the colonel. "You are here now, and here you will remain. Seize that man."

Three soldiers burst into the room at the moment, and they sprang at Captain Rock at the word of command.

The Whiteboy leader did not stir until the soldiers' hands were on him, and he then struck out with tremendous force, hurling his assailants to the right and left as he strode out of the room, crying:

"I will call for you again, young lady."

Dashing out into the hallway, the daring man sprang down the steep steps to the gravel path and vaulted on his black steed as he sent forth a shrill cry.

About a dozen white figures on horseback then dashed across the lawn to join their leader as he rode toward them, while out through the house and stables rang the cry:

"To arm—to horse! The Whiteboys are out to-night!"

Colonel Tallon hobbled out on the balcony as well as he could, and when he beheld the daring Whiteboys retreating across the lawn he yelled to the dragoons:

"Mount and pursue in haste! A hundred pounds to the man who will take Captain Rock dead or alive. Set spurs and away."

Then there was mounting in hot haste, a confused jingling of swords and spurs, a few hasty orders from their captain, and fifty dragoons dashed across the lawn in pursuit of the flying outlaws.

Colonel Tallon watched the Whiteboys and their pursuers as they dashed along the highway at full speed, and he only

turned into the drawing room when they all disappeared over the brow of a hill.

The young girl was still standing near Captain Graham when Colonel Tallon hobbled toward her, crying:

"Ah, my dear girl, I am rejoiced to see you at my house. Do you know that mad rebel?"

"If you allude to Captain Rock, sir, I met him last night for the first time, when he saved my dear friends from a dreadful death at your orders."

"Pshaw, girl, that order was only intended to frighten Barrington, who was assisting the infernal rebels. 'Gad, but Captain Rock must be mad to fall into such a trap to-night, as he cannot escape now."

"He will escape, sir," said Julia, "and he will call here for me again."

"What nonsense, girl! The rascal and his band will be cut to pieces."

The words were scarcely uttered when the tramping of horses could be heard on the lawn outside, and Colonel Tallon hobbled to the window as he cried:

"The dragoons are back with their—— Mercy alive, the Whiteboys are on us again, and not a dragoon around to defend the house!"

About fifteen of the mounted Whiteboys drew up in front of the mansion at the moment and presented their carbines, while the leader rode up the steep steps on his black steed until he reached the door.

Halting the well-trained horse on the top steps, he struck on the door with his sword, and with great force, as he cried:

"I come for Miss Barrington, as I promised. Open, or I will ride in from the balcony to the drawing room."

Colonel Tallon staggered back from the window as he recognized the voice of the leader, and he turned to the young girl, crying:

"Save me from the outlaw, my good girl, and I will be more than a father to you. Oh, what a fool I was to be thus tricked!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE METHOD IN HIS MADNESS.

When young Captain Rock appeared at the mansion again, after having drawn the dragoons away, Colonel Tallon could see that he had been duped by the Whiteboys.

With the exception of a few officers and guests, he had no one to defend the place against a serious attack, as he could not depend on the male servants and stable boys, most of whom were friends of the rebels.

It was very evident, also, that Captain Rock did not apprehend a speedy return of the dragoons, as he knew that they were away in pursuit of some of his well-mounted friends, while he led another party to attack the mansion of the obnoxious military tyrant.

When Colonel Tallon saw that it was useless to attempt resistance, he ordered one of the servants to open the front door, and into the hallway on his black steed rode the captain of the Whiteboys, crying:

"I promised to return for you, Miss Barrington, and here I am."

Flinging open the door of the drawing room with his sword, the young man rode into the apartment, as he continued:

"Do you surrender, colonel?"

"Oh, yes, by all means," cried the trembling tyrant. "Take the young lady, and——"

Colonel Tallon hesitated to finish the sentence, but Captain Rock glared at him from under his white mask as he cried:

"Away to the mischief with you out of here, you would like

to say, but I am not in any hurry, sir, until I settle with you." As the young man spoke he turned to some of his dismounted followers, who had made haste to follow him into the house, and he said to them:

"Hasten through the house and secure all the people in it. Seize all the arms and valuables you can lay your hands on. I will assist you here. Quiet, Blackbird."

Captain Rock still maintained his position on the back of the horse as he gave his orders, and when the spirited animal appeared a little restless in that novel situation, the few words from his master subdued him on the instant.

It was a strange picture that was thus presented in the large and luxurious apartment.

Colonel Tallon had dropped on an easy-chair near the window, his fat face almost livid with terror, while he held the mantle of the young girl, as if imploring her protection from the outlaws.

Julia Barrington advanced toward the rider with her hands raised and extended as if welcoming him back, while at the same time her face betrayed some alarm at the presence of the fiery black steed.

Captain Graham stood behind the chair on which his colonel was seated, and his face was also showing signs of fresh alarm.

The tall, white figure on the black steed appeared like a marble statue, as they stood in the centre of the room facing the others, and the effect was more impressive still when Captain Rock raised his sword and pointed it at Colonel Tallon as he cried:

"I came back for the young lady, unless she desires to remain under your protection, and then——"

"Oh, no, no," cried Julia. "I hate the wretch, and he knows it."

"That point is settled, then," said Captain Rock, "and now for the main object of my visit here. Come to me, young lady."

Julia flung off the grasp on her mantle and advanced fearlessly to the side of the rider, as she said to him:

"I will and welcome, captain."

Reaching down his left arm, the young Whiteboy raised the girl from the floor and placed her before him on the horse, saying:

"You will not fear to ride with me?"

"No, indeed, sir."

"Now, Colonel Tallon," continued the young leader, "I will settle with you. What was your object in having this young lady brought here to your house?"

Mustering all the courage he could command, Colonel Tallon answered:

"I am the young lady's guardian by law, and I desired to protect her in these warlike times, Captain Rock."

"By slaying her kindest guardians? Tell the whole truth, sir."

"What more can I tell?"

"Say that she is rich, and that you desired to seize her property," answered Captain Rock. "Say that she is beautiful, and that you aimed to make her your wife."

"The villain did make me the offer a month ago," cried Julia.

"Now we are getting at the scheme," continued the young Whiteboy.

"Is it a crime to offer my hand to a cousin?" asked Colonel Tallon.

"It is a crime to plot the murder of her best friends and then try to throw the blame on me, and for that crime you will suffer," answered Captain Rock, in merciless tones. "Drag the rascal out on the lawn. Out with the other prisoners, and take the best horses from the stables. Hasten, my lads. Cap-

tain Graham, you have nothing to fear, as I will keep my pledge to you."

The active Whiteboys did not waste any time in collecting the spoils; and the trembling prisoners were soon dragged out on the lawn, while the tyrant colonel kept calling for mercy.

Young Captain Rock dashed down the steep steps again on the black steed, with the fearless girl in front of him, as she cried:

"What a noble steed for a war on the mountain. He would climb the hillside like a wild goat, I believe."

"Blackbird will go where I order him," answered the young Whiteboy, who was very proud of his black steed. "I will now make you a present of the best horse in the stables."

Directing one of his men to place a side-saddle on a splendid gray hunter just taken from the stable, Captain Rock placed the young girl on the back of the animal, saying:

"I know that you are a fearless rider, and your courage may soon be put to the test."

Patting the gray horse on the neck, the young girl replied, with a merry smile:

"We will follow Blackbird through fire and water, and I will call him Gray Linnet."

"Mercy, mercy! spare my life!" cried Colonel Tallon, as the Whiteboys dragged him to a tree with a stout rope around his neck.

A wild scream of terror rang out on the moment, and an old lady ran down the steps from the mansion, crying:

"Spare my son! Oh, if you are human beings, you will not murder him before my eyes!"

The old lady darted across the lawn as she uttered the cry and flung her arms around Colonel Tallon's neck while she continued:

"They must not murder you. Oh, where are the soldiers to protect you?"

"Release the man," cried Captain Rock, as he bent his ear to listen, "and then let us hasten away. Colonel Tallon, remember, hereafter, that there are other mothers in Ireland."

The old lady stared up at the Whiteboy leader for a moment ere she exclaimed:

"I know that voice! Mercy on me, who is it, my son?"

"Captain Rock, the famous rebel."

"Away with us," cried the young captain. "We will meet again, Colonel Tallon."

The Whiteboys then dashed across the lawn, bearing away as many arms and horses as possible, while Colonel Tallon ground his teeth in rage as he hissed after them:

"You may swear we will meet again, you infernal robber, but it will be when you are swinging on the gallows-tree."

The Whiteboys had scarcely disappeared from the lawn when the heavy clatter of horses' hoofs was heard on the road, and a bugle blast rang out at the same time.

Colonel Tallon shouted in glee when he heard the bugle, and he then cried to Captain Graham:

"It is another party of dragoons from the town. Hasten out and send them after the infernal robbers. My force must soon be on the return march, and they will cut off the rascals."

Captain Graham dashed across the lawn as fast as he could, and he met a party of about forty dragoons at the lodge gate.

Hailing the officer in command, he cried:

"Who commands this force?"

"I have that honor," answered a brutal-looking officer. "How are you, captain?"

The speaker was a thorough English bloodhound by nature, and he was known in infamous history as Major SIRR.

Captain Graham gave the colonel's orders in as few words as possible, and the major dashed away at the head of his troop, crying:

"I came out after other game, but I will have a run after the Whiteboys."

Captain Rock had heard the clatter of the dragoons advancing from the town before he left the lawn, and he could also hear them thundering along the road after him.

Casting one glance ahead, he turned to Julia, who was riding by his side, saying:

"We are pursued by the dragoons, and we must take to the mountain."

"To the mountain for me, then," cried the young girl. "When the wolves are out in the valley there's no shelter there for the lambs."

A single horseman rode toward them at the moment, and he drew his horse to the side of the road, as he cried in fearless tones:

"Who comes here?"

"The Whiteboys of the mountain," answered Captain Rock. "If you fear the wolves in red ride on with us."

The horseman spurred his horse to the side of the Whiteboy, and rode on beside him as he remarked, in clear, musical tones:

"I think I ride with Captain Rock."

The Whiteboy leader cast a scrutinizing glance at the stranger as he answered:

"I am Captain Rock. If you are a friend of the cause give me the sign and your name."

The stranger made a motion with his right hand and then bent over to whisper a name into Captain Rock's ear, while he continued, aloud:

"I am rejoiced to meet you if the wolves are prowling around, dear friend."

Captain Rock saluted the horseman in the most respectful manner as he answered:

"The red wolves are out in force, sir, and I am surprised to see you here alone."

The stranger smiled in confidence as he replied, in cheerful tones:

"Do you not see that I am disguised? A poor farmer on his way to Dublin should not be molested by the red wolves."

They were galloping at a good pace, and the graceful riders could converse without much difficulty, not being overheard by those behind.

Julia was still riding close to the young leader, and, as she could hear the words uttered, she felt that the plain-looking stranger was a person of some importance.

Captain Rock cast another careful glance at the horseman, who was mounted on an excellent roadster, ere he rejoined:

"The disguise is well enough, sir, but you ride too stiff for a poor farmer. And, then, your voice and manner! I wouldn't give a single penny for your chances of escape if Major SIRR saw you riding through New Ross."

"Is that fellow in New Ross?"

"He was there to-day, sir. What name may I call you at present?"

"I am simple Tom Martin, a poor farmer, on my way to Dublin to see my landlord."

"And you have a pass, Mr. Martin?"

"Oh, yes, and it is signed by Colonel Tallon, the commander of this district."

"That is well, so far; but you will have to disguise yourself better, and change your voice and manner more, if you want to reach Dublin in safety."

The stranger laughed merrily ere he replied:

"In good truth, captain, I have no relish for this hide-and-seek work, and I long for the moment when we will be out in the open battlefield in fair array."

"We are almost prepared about here, sir."

"Yes, but we are not elsewhere. We must have arms and some officers from France before we can take the open field, my brave friend. Do I not hear a troop of horses behind us?"

"You do, sir; and there's another in front of us," answered

Captain Rock, as he pointed to a strong party of horsemen galloping toward them. "Let us in here."

The Whiteboy leader turned the black steed into a lane and then pushed on at a full gallop, while he cried to the others:

"Keep on as fast as I do, and we will soon reach the mountain."

The Whiteboys did push on with all speed; but the two parties of dragoons soon met near the lane, and they joined in the pursuit, led on by Major SIRR, who cried:

"There goes Captain Rock and his Whiteboys, my brave men. Five hundred pounds reward for the robber's head, and five apiece for each of his followers. Spur on, spur on!"

The major's voice was as loud and piercing as that of a trumpet, and Captain Rock could hear it.

Turning to the stranger, he asked:

"Do you recognize that voice, sir?"

"It is Major SIRR, I think."

"Yes, it is Major SIRR, and he did not ride from town after us."

"Then you think he is after me?"

"I do, sir. He has the scent of a bloodhound, and he has his spies in every hole and corner. 'Tis more than probable that he has got word of your visit here, and he is out after you with his wolves. You must up to the mountain with us."

"But I must get right to Dublin at all hazards, my brave friend."

"Is it a matter of life and death for you to get there at once, sir?"

"It is—it is! My presence there on the morrow means the life of the Irish nation, and my absence may be the death of our cause."

"Then you must get to Dublin, sir, and I will escort you. Now to baffle the bandogs, and then for the road to Dublin."

Captain Rock then pulled up in the lane, telling his friends to ride on at full speed.

They were approaching the foot of a steep mountain, and the dragoons were closing on them, as the Whiteboys were somewhat encumbered with the horses and the arms they had taken from the mansion.

When his troop had passed on the lane, Captain Rock rode fearlessly back to meet the dragoons, and when he was within a few hundred feet of their leader he pulled up, crying aloud:

"Halt! Who comes there?"

Major SIRR called a halt on the instant, as he was under the impression that the Whiteboys were cornered, and that they were about to ask terms of surrender.

Spurring forward some paces ahead of his men, the confident English officer cried:

"Do you surrender, rebel dog?"

"We may, if you would give us fair terms, Major SIRR, as you are too many for us," answered Captain Rock, in humble tones.

Then call on your rascals to halt, and we will see. Who are you?"

"I am Captain Rock. My lads can't go any further now, major. What terms will you give us if we give up?"

"The rope of the hangman for every rascal of you. Forward to the charge, men, and cut the rascals down without mercy."

The fierce major spurred on to the charge as he gave the order, dashing away ahead of his men, in full hope of slaying or taking the famous Whiteboy with his own hands.

Captain Rock awaited the assault, and he even moved back to meet his enemy, as he yelled aloud, in tones that could be heard by friends and foes alike:

"Here at you then, butcher. To the rocks, my brave lads, and I will soon be with you."

Major SIRR tried to pull up when he saw the gallant White-

boy presenting such a bold front, but the spirited animal felt the spurs and he heard the order for the charge, and on he went at full speed.

Drawing his pistol, the major fired at the Whiteboy leader, yelling:

"No mercy to the rebels!"

The ball flew wide of the mark; and the major drew his sword in desperation as he closed with his opponent, while he yelled to his men:

"Spur on, you rascals!"

The two steeds met in the lane, the two swords flashed together for a moment, and then one horse and one rider rolled over in the dust, while a yell of rage burst from the on-rushing dragoons.

A cry of triumph rang out from Captain Rock as he turned his gallant steed to face the mountain, while out flashed his two pistols at the same moment.

Then down went two of the foremost of the dragoons' horses and their riders, blocking the lane for a time, while on like a hurricane swept the black steed and its gallant rider as a shower of balls went flying around them.

Captain Rock dashed on to the foot of the mountain, and casting one glance back, he could see that the dragoons were in some confusion in the lane.

Forcing his steed up the steep path, he waved his sword in defiance as he yelled to his friends above:

"Give them a volley, my lads!"

A sharp volley then rang out from behind the rocks; fierce yells and cries of pain arose in the lane, and the baffled dragoons were thrown into still wilder disorder.

Dashing up to his sheltered friends, the Whiteboy leader sprang from his steed and seized one of the captured muskets, crying:

"Give them another round with these, and the night is ours."

Another volley soon rang out; more cries of pain and disorder arose in the lane, and then the bugle blast over the mountain, sounding the retreat of the dragoons from that narrow trap.

CHAPTER V.

ON A DANGEROUS JOURNEY.

When the smoke cleared off, Captain Rock peered down into the lane as he said to the stranger, who had taken an active part in the skirmish:

"I'd give my good horse to be sure that Major SIRR was down forever, sir."

"They are bearing their dead and wounded away with them, I think," replied the stranger, peering down also.

"If I had twenty more of my lads here I'd be down at them."

"Are they in full retreat, think you?"

"I don't think they'll stop until they get to Colonel Tallon's, sir. Three of you lads ride down and follow them," cried the young captain; "but don't go too far."

"Wasn't that Major SIRR you encountered, my brave friend?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, sir. I thought to clip his head off, but I missed my work and struck him across the breast. Now we must see about the journey to Dublin."

"Then you insist on going with me?"

"Every step, sir. I'd never forgive myself if anything happened you on the way. Let us see how we'll manage it."

Captain Rock and the stranger then consulted together for some time.

When they had agreed on their disguises and mode of travel, the Whiteboys returned to report about the dragoons.

The whole party had drawn up at Colonel Tallon's mansion. When Captain Rock heard the report of his scouts he turned to the stranger, saying:

"If Major SIRR is not badly injured he will be out after you to-night again, as he is a restless bloodhound; but they will not be after us again in a hurry."

"Then you think he is on the watch for me to-night, captain?"

"I do, sir. Why should he ride out here with that troop, unless he was after some high game, when he knew that Colonel Tallon had a good force at the mansion? Because he had some private information that you were around, and the hound wanted to take or slay you himself. He does not generally trouble himself in hunting us Whiteboys."

"You may be right, but I must get to Dublin at all hazards."

"And to Dublin you will go, sir," said Captain Rock, as he turned away to give some orders to his men.

The others then proceeded up the mountain, the young girl accompanying them.

Before parting with Julia, the young leader drew her aside, saying:

"You will be safe up the mountain, but don't venture down, as Colonel Tallon would give his eyes to get you again."

"He will never get me, captain. And so you must go to Dublin?"

"I must, indeed; but I will be back in a few days."

"I suppose you couldn't tell me who that gentleman may be?"

"I would trust you and welcome, but the secret is not mine. I can tell you to pray for his safety, however, as he would be a great loss to us now."

"I'll pray for the pair of you," answered Julia. "Will you ride Blackbird to Dublin?"

"That I will, but I will change his name and his dress also."

Bidding adieu to the young girl, the young captain hastened down into the valley with the stranger, as he said to him:

"You noticed that young lady, sir?"

"Yes, friend; and I think she is a very superior person."

"There is no doubt of that, sir, and she has a strange history to tell; but I will not trouble you about it now. We will to my friend's house and get ready for the journey."

About an hour after two horsemen were riding along the road toward New Ross at an easy gallop, one being a little in advance of the other.

The foremost rider was a tall, handsome gentleman in the full prime of life, with a full dark beard, and long hair flowing in ringlets over his shoulders.

The rider behind him appeared to be a servant somewhat advanced in years, as he kept a few paces in the rear, and only spoke when he was appealed to by the gentleman.

As they approached the lodge gate leading up to Colonel Tallon's mansion they could perceive several mounted dragoons on the lawn, and the tall gentleman turned to his servant, as he quietly remarked:

"That looks a little warlike, Tim, and the rebels must be out."

"The rebels are out, sir," cried a rough voice, as an officer stepped out from the lodge at the head of five soldiers. "Draw up and give an account of yourselves."

The gentleman and his servant did draw up, while the former replied:

"Well, officer, what do you wish to know?"

"Your name, sir, and where you are going at present?"

"My name is Bassett, and I come from Kilkenny. I am going to Dublin with my servant here," was the calm response of the tall gentleman. "May I ask who I have the honor of addressing at present?"

"I am Major SIRR, in his majesty's service, Mr. Bassett. Are you in haste?"

"I am, major."

"Have you a pass for yourself and servant, sir? You must know that the rebels are up in arms, and the district is under martial law at present."

"We did hear of some disturbance around here when we left Kilkenny, major, but I did not deem it necessary to arm myself with a pass on the road to Dublin."

"It is necessary, sir. I would advise you to come up and procure one from Colonel Tallon, who commands this district. Of course you can prove that you are a loyal subject of the crown?"

"Why, as to that, I presume my word will have to be taken, as I did not deem it necessary to bring letters of recommendation from home with me. This is very annoying."

"I have orders to arrest all persons found out at night without a pass, sir," said Major Sirr, in gruff tones, "and I will detain you if you do not give us proof that you are a loyal subject of the crown. You may be a rebel officer in disguise, for all I know."

The tall gentleman hesitated a moment, as if in doubt what to say, while his servant appeared to be in great distress at the delay and the doubts cast on his master.

"I am known in New Ross, major," said the gentleman, fumbling in his pocket, as if in search of a document to prove his identity. "Hang it all, why did I leave home in such haste?"

Major Sirr was also watching the old servant the while, and he promptly responded:

"I am just riding to the town, sir, and you can accompany us. If you prove yourself a royal subject there you can get a pass and proceed on your journey."

"Thank you, indeed, major. I will have no trouble in the town."

In less than five minutes after the gentleman was riding along with Major Sirr and a bodyguard of seven dragoons.

The aged servant kept close behind his master as he muttered to himself:

"Our troubles commence early, but I have full faith in the bold captain. What a villainous face that Sirr has!"

The tall horseman rode on with a high head, chatting merrily with the major, and they both denounced the rebels in the strongest terms possible.

Two dragoons rode on about twenty yards in the front, while the others kept about the same distance in the rear.

When they were within half a mile of the town the tall gentleman said:

"By the bye, major, have you met this Captain Rock, who is becoming so famous in this neighborhood of late?"

"I have met the low rascal, and I hope to meet him soon again. He is a common cutthroat and a vile coward," growled the lying major. "Wait till I get my hands on him, and I'll cut him to pieces."

"Why, I heard that the fellow was pretty brave, major, and that he could act the gentleman when it suited his purpose."

"And I can tell you, sir, that he is a low, vulgar, sneaking coward, like all the rest of the rebels, from their chief down."

"Why, major, you must confess that Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the leader of the rebels, is not a vulgar coward, at least."

"But I say he is, sir. Why is he sneaking around the country in disguise at present, if he is not a cowardly cur? Be careful how you defend the rebel dog, sir, as I won't hear to it."

"See here, Major Sirr," answered the gentleman, in angry tones. "I want you to know that you can't bully me, if you had a hundred soldiers around you. I know Lord Edward, and I tell you to your face that you are not fit to clean his boots."

The brutal major drew up his horse and out flashed his sword, as he yelled:

"I knew you were a rebel dog in disguise, and I will make

you eat your words on the spot. Draw and fight. Halt, there!"

The gentleman pulled up at the same moment and drew his sword as he said to his servant in quiet tones:

"Draw into the lane there, Tim, while I settle with this bully."

"I'll slit your nose for you," cried the angry bully, as he rode at the gentleman brandishing his sword.

The dragoons had halted, but they did not approach their superior officer as he attacked the stranger.

That stranger waited the attack with a quiet smile on his face, drawing his horse a little closer to the lane, which his servant had already entered.

The excited bully urged his horse on to the attack, and the swords were soon clashing together, as he cried:

"I'll slit your nose, rebel dog, and I'll hang you in the morning."

"You are better at the hanging than at the fighting, I fancy, major," cried his opponent, as he knocked the weapon from the major's grasp, and hurling him from his horse almost at the same moment.

Then wheeling his own willing steed, the tall gentleman dashed into the lane after his servant, as he cried:

"We'll meet you in town soon. Hurrah for Lord Edward!"

The servant was dashing along the lane when his master rode in, and when he heard the cry he muttered to himself:

"What a daring man he is; but I believe the boldest course is the best."

Major Sirr was soon on his feet again, and he sprang into his saddle, as he yelled to the dragoons, who were moving toward him at the time:

"Spur on after the dogs! My life on it that is Captain Rock himself and the servant is the man I am after."

"You are right, major," yelled back the tall rider. "I am Captain Rock, and my servant is Lord Edward. Come and take us, bloodhound, if you can."

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTAIN ROCK'S BOLD MOVE.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald was the leader of the Irish patriots at the time when England was endeavoring to destroy the national parliament in Dublin.

The young nobleman was a gallant soldier, he was the head of the noblest family in Ireland, and he was beloved by the people.

Lord Edward entered the English army at an early age, with the view of preparing himself in the art of war, so that he could lead his own people to freedom.

When he became an active member of the patriot band, he resigned his commission in the English army and paid a visit to France to consult with the military leaders of that country who had promised aid to Ireland.

While in Paris Lord Edward married a beautiful young French lady, who proved to be a devoted wife in the trying scenes he was destined to encounter.

On his return to Ireland he was a marked man.

From that time forward Lord Edward was hunted by the English spies and hirelings, and he was compelled to adopt various disguises while traveling through the country, organizing the people for the coming struggle.

As all the strong cities and towns were held by the English, and as the patriots were not fully prepared for a general outbreak, such leaders as Lord Edward were compelled to move with great caution in order to avoid arrest and a speedy death at the hands of their enemies.

Several of the trained bands of the English were out in search of the Irish leader at all times, and as they were commanded by English officers acquainted with Lord Edward, the gallant leader had many narrow escapes.

The infamous character known as Major Sirr was the special spy set on the track of the Irish leader, and he was tireless in the pursuit, using a whole army of merciless subordinates to aid him in the work.

Major Sirr hated all Irish patriots, but he was especially embittered against Lord Edward, as the noble young Irish officer had baffled the rascal in a private scheme of plunder set on foot on a former occasion.

When Captain Rock met Lord Edward on the highway that night, the latter was returning from France, where he had been sadly disappointed in his hopes of armed assistance on the part of his friends there.

The bold Whiteboy felt that Major Sirr suspected the pretended old servant, and he deemed it best to risk an escape before reaching the guarded town with the soldiers.

Lord Edward pushed into the lane on receiving the hint from Captain Rock, but the brave soldier did not ride on until he saw that the fearless Whiteboy had defeated Major Sirr and that he was clear of the soldiers on the high-road.

When the soldiers rode into the lane after the Whiteboy, Major Sirr was close behind them yelling like a madman, and calling on them to fire at the fugitives.

Captain Rock was soon up with Lord Edward, and he cried:

"Push on now, and I'll keep the rascals in play until we reach the woods, and then we'll skirt the town. That villain behind us has as many lives as a cat, as I could wager my life I had him that time."

The soldiers fired a volley with their horse pistols at that moment, but the bullets did not touch the pursued.

"Spur on, if you kill the horses!" cried Major Sirr, in furious tones. "The rebel dogs must not escape us."

Keeping behind Lord Edward in the narrow lane, as if to guard him from the bullets, young Captain Rock cried:

"Spur on your horse, sir, as he is not a bad one, and we'll beat them to the woods. Yell till your throat is hoarse, you English hound, but you won't take us!"

The roadster on which Lord Edward was mounted was a fleet and sure-footed animal, and he made splendid time along the lane toward the wood.

Captain Rock was on his own tireless favorite, the good steed being so disguised as to baffle prying eyes.

The horses of the dragoons were soon left behind in the race, while the brutal major stormed and fumed as he urged on his fellows, crying:

"Away with one of you off to the town and send a troop along the road to Dublin to cut them off. The others will keep up the hunt with me. Spur on, spur on."

Captain Rock dashed into the wood beyond a moment after with his leader, as he yelled back:

"All the hounds in your army won't catch us now, major. Come on, and my Whiteboys will have at you again."

Fearing an ambush in the woods, the cunning major halted his men in the lane, took a survey of the high walls and fences around, and then gave an order to ride back, as he cried:

"We will hasten to the town and cut them off on the road beyond. If that is the rebel leader he is bound for Dublin, and we will soon cut him off, or hunt him to the death."

The young Whiteboy heard the orders of his enemy, and he drew up in the woods with Lord Edward, as he said:

"My lord, that fellow is a born man-hunter, and he has stolen a march on us after our gallant dash for it."

Lord Edward cast a glance toward the town as he rejoined:

"Then it will be impossible for us to skirt the town and get out on the high road ahead of them, my friend?"

"I fear it will. Besides, if we did get out ahead of them, they would be after us on fresh steeds and run you down."

"Then what would you advise, captain, as I must push on to Dublin?"

"Would one day and night matter so much in getting there, my lord?"

"Oh, yes, yes! I have delayed too long now, as I had trouble in landing on the coast. It is decided to strike a blow in Dublin at once, and I must be there to lead my friends. If I had fifty good troopers, I would attempt to cut my way through the town."

"You can have them in a couple of hours, general, but I assure you it would be the height of folly to make the attempt, as they have over a regiment of dragoons stationed there at present. We can take to the mountains and work around."

"That would be slow traveling, and I could not get there in time."

The young Whiteboy cast an anxious look at the gallant leader as he asked:

"I suppose you have other disguises in the saddlebags, my lord?"

"Oh, yes, my friend. I have changed them four times since leaving the coast. May I ask what your object was in declaring who we were to our enemies just now?"

"It may appear like a wild freak to you, general, but my idea was to draw Major Sirr and his fellows on in a hot hunt after us, so that they couldn't raise the hue and cry against you in the town until we were around on the road to Dublin."

"It was a bold movement, but the major saw through it, as you see."

"He did—confound him!—but we'll baffle the sly fox yet. Oh, if we only had another horse like Blackbird here," said Captain Rock, as he fondled his splendid steed. "We'll have to change steeds, my lord."

"This horse is a good traveler and he is not at all weary yet. What would we gain by changing steeds now, captain?"

"I was thinking of a bold move, but you must not risk it except on a steed that will go like the wind, sir, as your life is too precious to the country now."

"I risk my life every day. What bold move would you suggest?"

"You see, sir, Major Sirr and his hounds will be certain to be on the watch for us beyond the town, and all the way to Dublin for that matter."

"Yes, it is evident now that he has been on the watch for me."

"And he knew you well in former days?"

"Yes, he had some reason to know me, although I have encountered him safely in disguise since, my friend."

"But the rascal is getting keener of scent every hour of his life. I am almost certain he suspected you out on the road, and he was only waiting to get to the town to be sure of his game."

"I agree with you, Captain Rock; but what is the bold move you would propose?"

"It is very dangerous, Lord Edward, and I fear you will think me mad to propose it."

"It is by bold movements that great events are decided, captain. Remember that I must get to Dublin."

"Well, sir, this is what I propose: You will assume the garb of a gentleman and ride my horse, while I will put on the servant's livery this time."

"That is simple enough. What then?"

"We'll ride boldly through the town, giving the password, of course, and say we are just from Colonel Tallon's house."

"But how will you get the password for the night, captain?"

"Leave that to me, sir. Let us move down to the road, as there's a friend's house down here where we can change the clothes. That is if you agree."

"It is a bold move, captain, but I cannot suggest anything better," answered the brave Lord Edward, as they rode back through the lane.

Captain Rock rode a little ahead, keeping on the alert for foes on the road.

They were nearing the end of the lane, when the young Whiteboy heard the clatter of hoofs along the road, and he soon after espied two horsemen galloping toward them, coming from the direction of Colonel Tallon's country mansion.

Drawing back in the lane, and inspired by a new idea as he beheld the glitter of the accoutrements of the riders, Captain Rock said in hasty tones:

"Did you ever hear of Freeney, the highwayman, Lord Edward?"

"What a question to ask at this time, captain! Yes, I have."

"Well, I am going to play Freeney now, and you are my man. We have no time for explanations, but pull your hat over your eyes. Out with your pistols and follow me."

Placing a black mask on his face, and drawing his pistols, the daring Whiteboy touched his horse with the spur, and they dashed out on the road at full gallop.

The two horsemen had just reached the lane at the moment, one riding a little in advance of the other, when the foremost found himself suddenly confronted by the masked rider, while a threatening voice cried out:

"Halt and deliver, mister officer. At the other, Ned, and down with him if he raises a hand."

Lord Edward dashed at the other rider with all the spirit of a knight of the road, and clapped a pistol to his head as he cried, in hoarse tones:

"Give up your purse, or I'll stretch you dead on the ground."

The two riders were an English officer and a dragoon, and they halted on the instant of being thus confronted.

The officer was a little startled by the sudden appearance of the highwayman, but he soon made a motion as if to draw a pistol from the holster, crying:

"You rascal, I'll——"

Before he could finish the sentence, Captain Rock gave him a blow on the side of the head with his pistol and knocked him from his horse.

Springing from his own steed a second after, the daring Whiteboy clapped the muzzle of the pistol at the head of the fallen officer, as he cried:

"Give in, or there will be a vacancy in his majesty's service. I am Freeney the highwayman, and I don't stand any nonsense."

"I surrender," gasped the defeated officer.

The dragoon also made a show of resistance, but when he saw his officer dealt with in such a rough manner, while Lord Edward's pistol was within an inch of his head, he held up his hand, crying:

"Don't shoot, robber, as I give up, but you won't get much from me."

The two soldiers were disarmed and secured in double quick time, and Captain Rock then proceeded to blindfold them, as he whispered to Lord Edward:

"This is a happy stroke of fortune. Lead them up here to the cabin."

The prisoners and their horses were led along the wood, while the officer protested, saying:

"Why don't you take our purses, gentlemen, and let us go on our way?"

"What fools we are," answered Captain Rock, "so that you could ride to the town and get the whole garrison out after us."

"I protest to you that I am on important business, and I would not meddle with you again to-night, gentlemen," said the officer.

"Where do you come from?"

"From Colonel Tallon's mansion, a few miles back of here."

"And where are you going on such important business at this hour?"

"I cannot tell you, gentlemen."

"Well, maybe we will find out for ourselves before we are much older."

Captain Rock was examining the officer's pockets as he led him along, placing the contents in his own as fast as possible.

As the young Whiteboy drew a sealed letter out, he glanced at the address, and then turned to Lord Edward with a happy smile, as he whispered to him:

"Fortune favors us, indeed! This letter is addressed to Major SIRR."

Lord Edward did not see the importance of the capture at the moment, and he merely nodded his head in approval.

They soon reached a small cabin a little distance in from the road, where Captain Rock was warmly received by an old peasant and his two hearty sons, all of whom were secret members of his band.

Having placed the prisoners in charge of the young men, Captain Rock whispered to one of them:

"Take them into the back room and off with their outer clothes as fast as you can. Don't let them see anything for the world. I will tell you what to do with them before I leave you, my lads."

Captain Rock then drew forth the letter addressed to Major SIRR and opened it without breaking the seal, as he said to Lord Edward, with a droll smile:

"I suppose you think me mad for playing the highwayman, sir?"

"I did think so at first, but I begin to realize what you are at now."

"Read that, and you will see that we are in great luck, providing you are willing to play the bold part to the end."

Lord Edward did not answer, as he was reading Colonel Tallon's letter to Major SIRR, which read as follows:

"Dear Major SIRR.—You were correct about that infamous rebel leader, Fitzgerald. I have just received positive information that he is now in this neighborhood and on his way to Dublin disguised as a farmer.

The rascal has managed to get a pass from me under the name of Thomas Martin, one of my tenants; look out for him at New Ross and the other posts along the road.

"I am organizing a force to go out after that infernal robber, Captain Rock, and we will mob the hound ere long.

"Seize the arch-rebel, Fitzgerald, and we will hang them on the same gallows. Yours, for the king,

"Tallon."

"P. S.—The bearer is instructed to warn the officers at New Ross, and then ride on to seek you on the road to Dublin,

"T."

When Lord Edward finished the reading of the letter Captain Rock asked:

"What do you think of that, sir?"

"I think it is most fortunate that I encountered you to-night, captain, and that you were inspired when you played the part of a highwayman."

"What parts should we play next, sir?"

Lord Edward smiled and pointed to the inner room where the prisoners were as he answered, in subdued tones:

"We will bear the letter to Major SIRR, and I will be the officer. I presume he had a pass for the night?"

"Yes, sir, and here it is. It is an order to pass Lieutenant Danvers and a dragoon on important service, and it is duly signed by Colonel Tallon. You will play the officer and I the dragoon."

"The greatest danger we will incur is the chance of detection by Major SIRR, but we must risk that, captain."

"Then we will get ready for the road and away, sir."

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE DANGEROUS JOURNEY AGAIN.

Captain Rock's first care, after changing clothes with the prisoners, was to examine their horses.

The animal on which the officer had been riding was selected for Lord Edward's use, and he was strong and fresh, and showed points denoting good speed.

Taking his own favorite, Blackbird, for the road, the two daring men set out on the dangerous journey again, having instructed his faithful friends as to the disposal of the prisoners and their horses.

The Whiteboy leader did not rob the poor dragoon, but he did share the contents of the officer's purse with his friends.

Having obtained the password for the night from the dragoon, the bold riders had no difficulty in passing through the town, as they did not pause to explain the object of their mission.

When they were safe out on the highroad again, Captain Rock drew up beside Lord Edward, as he said:

"Now comes the ticklish part of the game, sir, as Major SIRR is sure to be on the alert ahead with a strong party."

"Well, we will trust to fortune, my brave friend. If I must meet the rascal face to face, he will detect the cheat, as I do not resemble the burly officer."

"You don't, sir, while I will pass for a poor unknown dragoon any day. If Major SIRR knows Lieutenant Danvers, I will find it out soon, and then we must dash through them at all risk. I wish you would ride Blackbird, Lord Edward."

"This is a splendid animal, and I would not deprive you of your steed, my excellent friend."

"But you will promise me one thing, sir?"

"What is that?"

"You must take my horse if we happen to be pressed hard."

"I will promise that, hoping that my own steed will bear me on in safety."

The travelers soon struck on a mounted patrol of six dragoons, but they passed on without any trouble on giving the password, while they also learned from the corporal in charge that Major SIRR was at a village tavern about four miles ahead.

Two other patrol parties were encountered before the travelers reached the village occupied by Major SIRR and twenty dragoons.

That village was situated in a deep valley, with steep mountains on each side of it, thus rendering it impossible for the travelers to steal around, and thereby avoid their watchful enemies.

There was a light in the tavern as the two travelers rode boldly into the village, while Captain Rock said to his leader:

"Remember, sir, if I call out the word I said you will dash on, unless you see good cause to do it before."

"I will remember, my brave friend, but I must request you not to risk your life too rashly in my behalf. Fall back a little now, as we are on them."

Major SIRR was resting in the back room of the tavern, with a bottle of wine before him, when the travelers rode up.

Being almost ever on the alert, the bloodhound sprang up, crying to a soldier at the outer door:

"Who goes there?"

"An officer and a dragoon, sir," was the answer, as the soldier stepped into the inner room. "Are you present?"

The major had his troop posted near the door of the tavern, and he had given orders to stop and hold all travelers passing along, without informing any of them who was in command of the party.

Feeling assured that the daring rebels had not yet passed along, the cunning major desired to scrutinize all those thus seized without showing himself at the time.

As the instructions thus given did not apply to his brother officers, Major SIRR promptly answered the soldier:

"Certainly. I am always present to an officer in the king's service. If his business is not too urgent, ask him in."

The man hastened out, and he soon returned, leading in a tall, full-bearded dragoon.

The major had taken his seat again, and he stared up at the common dragoon, as he demanded, in gruff tones:

"How now, sirrah? Are you an officer?"

"I am only a private, major. Lieutenant Danvers awaits outside, and as he rides in haste he begs that you will excuse him."

"Do you know me, fellow?"

"Yes, sir. You are Major SIRR."

"Where is your lieutenant going?"

"To Dublin, sir, at the command of Colonel Tallon."

"Hang my eyes, but the lieutenant is an old acquaintance, and he will drink a cup of wine with me ere he sets out for the city. Bring out the cup and bottle."

The disguised Captain Rock seized the bottle and cup and strode out after the brutal major, who was advancing to Lord Edward, as he cried:

"How are you, Danvers? What is your haste, that you cannot stop to take a cup of wine with an old friend?"

Lord Edward was on horseback out in the middle of the road, with the military cloak drawn up about his face.

One of Major SIRR's men stood near him holding Captain Rock's steed.

It was quite dark on the road, as the light from the tavern was very dim, and Major SIRR could not well scrutinize the face or form of his pretended friend as he moved out to greet him.

Speaking in very husky tones, while making his steed prance at the same time, the disguised Irish leader replied:

"You must excuse me, major, but I am riding in great haste."

"What is the matter with your voice, Danvers? You speak as if you had a fearful cold. Take a cup of wine."

"No, I thank you. Yes, I caught a fearful cold on the mountain. Confound this horse, as I cannot hold him. Good night, major, as I must be on the road."

"Hold on there," yelled the major, as he sprang to seize Lord Edward's horse. "If you are Danvers, I'd like to see your face."

"Away to Dublin!" cried Captain Rock, as he sprang at Major SIRR and felled him with the bottle.

Lord Edward spurred on at the instant, and bold Captain Rock darted after him on foot crying:

"Come on, Blackbird."

The Whiteboy's steed made a sudden bound forward on hearing his master's order, and the dragoon holding him was hurled aside with great force.

Then on dashed Blackbird.

Captain Rock did not wait for his horse, but the good animal was soon by his side, while on ahead rode Lord Edward, his horse making splendid time.

The Whiteboy sprang on Blackbird's back while the animal was still in motion, and then raising his voice to the highest pitch, he yelled back:

"Many thanks for the bottle of wine, major, and we'll soon drink to your health."

The tough major was almost stunned by the blow, while his men could not comprehend the violent action of the pretended dragoon, not dreaming for a moment that he was a rebel in disguise.

Indeed, the man holding the rebel captain's horse was the only one who saw the blow given by the imperfect light, and he had received such a shock from the animal that he was not able to cry an alarm.

When Major SIRR could gasp forth, he pointed to the road, saying:

"My horse! All ride in pursuit! It is the infernal rebels!"

Two of the dragoons lifted the major to his saddle, and he spurred the horse forward as he cried out:

"On, on, and spare not the horses. A hundred pounds for the man who will strike down either of the blasted rebels."

Lord Edward pushed on for some distance at the best speed of the good horse, and as he looked back, he muttered:

"The gallant fellow is away safe. This will offer a good chance to test the steeds."

The Irish leader then drew up a little until Captain Rock was close behind him, when he cried out:

"My steed flies, captain, and I had to pull up for you."

A merry laugh rang out from the Whiteboy, and Blackbird was soon beside his companion as his master cried:

"Drink a drop of the major's wine, my lord, and then I will test your steed."

As the daring man spoke he drew the bottle from his pocket and presented it to his admiring leader.

Lord Edward seized the bottle and looked at his friend with a gracious smile, as he remarked:

"And is it possible you brought the bottle from the tavern?"

"To be sure, sir. Don't scruple to drink the enemy's liquor, as we may need a little encouragement ere long."

Lord Edward raised the bottle to his mouth, as he cried:

"Long life and success to the bravest of the Whiteboys!"

The outlaw took the bottle back and raised it to his lips, as he cried:

"Long life, health and prosperity to the noble chief of the Irish nation!"

Putting the bottle in his pocket again, the Whiteboy cast a look back, saying:

"They are pressing on after us. Now to see what your steed is made of, sir."

Captain Rock bent down and urged on his own steed at the moment, and the fleet animal bounded away ahead of the other with apparent ease.

Lord Edward spurred on his horse, but when he saw that Blackbird was leaving him at every stride, he cried:

"We cannot match you at all, my gallant friend."

Captain Rock pulled up a little as he proudly responded:

"There's not a horse in all Ireland the match of Blackbird, and the time has come for you to test him, sir. Here comes a troop of the enemy against us."

CHAPTER VIII.

BLACKBIRD IN FULL SWING.

When Captain Rock perceived his foes in front, and called on Lord Edward to change horses, he drew up his own steed to a canter as he continued, in tones of the most earnest entreaty:

"For Heaven's sake do not hesitate now, Lord Edward. Change horses, or Ireland will be without a leader to-morrow."

"But I cannot understand why we cannot pass those fellows in front?" protested Lord Edward. "We have the pass."

As if in response to the question, Major SIRR's party behind sent up a volley and a loud shout at the moment, and each of the fugitives could distinguish the loud, hoarse voice of the man-hunter, as he yelled:

"Tallyho, tallyho! Head off the fox in front there!"

That warning cry and the report from the pistols were borne to the dragoons in front on the still night air, and then a responsive voice could be heard beyond, crying:

"Tallyho, it is in front! We'll head off the fox ere morning."

Captain Rock was already springing from his horse, as he cried:

"Blackbird can climb the steep mountain like a goat, Lord Edward. Up with you on him, and I will ahead with you on foot. One moment's delay, and you are lost."

Being thus urged, the Irish leader sprang from his own horse to the black steed, as he said to his friend:

"They are pressing on us in front and rear. Why not charge on those in front?"

"Don't you see there are over a dozen of them, sir? Look well to your pistols, and don't touch the bridle at all. Follow me, old Blackbird, and look to your steps."

Captain Rock dashed up the steep mountainside, and the black horse ran after him, sending forth a friendly neigh as he kept close behind his master.

The dragoons in front were not more than fifty yards away at the moment, while Major SIRR and his party were dashing along at a furious pace within double the distance.

Lord Edward looked up the mountainside, and he muttered aloud:

"He can never get up there."

"Don't fear for that, Lord Edward," said Captain Rock, "as I'll wager my life Blackbird will follow me wherever I go."

"Fire on them! blaze away at the rascally rebels!" yelled Major SIRR.

The party in front sent a volley from their pistols up at the fugitives, but the balls fell short by several yards, while Captain Rock yelled back in defiance:

"Go to blazes, Major SIRR. If you want to take us, come up after us."

The good horse which Lord Edward had been riding galloped up the mountainside after the black steed at the moment, sending forth a shrill neigh, as if to say:

"We'll not part company so soon, my dark friend, as I can climb as well as you."

Captain Rock turned a moment to look back at his foes, and when he saw the riderless horse dashing up after them, he cried:

"That's all very nice, my boy; but it would be different if you had a man on your back."

"Then why shouldn't I go on foot with you, captain, and ease the horse?" asked Lord Edward, as he made a motion to dismount. "The good steed will follow you."

"Stay where you are, sir, as you are only a feather on Blackbird's back. Cast an eye on the rascals below now."

The dragoons in front were the first to reach the spot where the fugitives had taken to the mountain, and five of them attempted to ride up at the order of their officer.

As Captain Rock called Lord Edward's attention to them, three of the horses gave way in the steep ascent and rolled down again with their helpless riders.

The other two horses struggled up a few paces further, when they also gave way and rolled back to the road, all the riders yelling with pain and apprehension.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Captain Rock, as he clapped his hands

in glee. "The rascals thought they could follow Blackbird, but they now find their mistake. They'll try for us on foot now, sir, and you'll soon see Blackbird in full swing."

"It is a brave animal, indeed, and he is not blowing in the least."

"Not he, sir. Give him his own way, and he'd take you to the top of the Alps."

The riderless horse was still plunging up after the black steed, but the spirited animal was blowing at a furious rate.

Captain Rock kept on up the mountain with all the ease of a chamois-hunter, while he looked back now and again to watch the movements of his foes.

The tireless Major Sirr was the first to spring from his horse, as he cried to his men:

"Twelve of you dismount and follow me up the mountain. Let six of the others ride on with the horses and inform the garrisons along the line that Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Captain Rock are on their way to the city, disguised as English soldiers. Up with you, lads, and we'll chase the rebel hounds on the mountain. Tallyho, tallyho!"

"Tallyho, tallyho!" yelled Captain Rock. "You can't reach the fox this morning."

Major Sirr was an old mountaineer, and he led his men up with great care, selecting the easiest path for the ascent.

He did not expect to catch the fugitives before reaching the top, but he did hope to waylay them in one of the difficult passes they must encounter before reaching any of the public roads leading to Dublin.

Captain Rock was familiar with the mountain passes in the neighborhood, and he could lead Lord Edward to the city in safety by making a broad circuit, but he knew that time was all-important to the brave Irish leader that night.

Still pressing on, and keeping an eye on the horses, the young Whiteboy gazed at his pursuers, as he remarked:

"I'd like to have another whack at the major, Lord Edward."

"You will have a chance at some future day, perhaps, my good friend, but it is not necessary to come to blows with him now."

"Maybe not, sir, but I'll never rest easy until I floor him, as I feel that the dog was born for mischief."

The leader looked back, as he rejoined:

"They are pressing up very well, and the others are riding on as if to head us off."

"That is what I fear, Lord Edward. We will have to get down by a pass some seven miles beyond here, unless we strike over into Wicklow Mountains."

"What delay would that cause?"

"Seven or eight hours at least, sir."

"That is an age to me at present. We must push on to the pass."

"Then on to the pass we go, sir. Glory to you, my brave fellow."

The Whiteboy addressed the last words to the riderless horse, who was still struggling up behind Blackbird in a gallant manner when they were drawing near the top of the mountain.

Casting his eyes back again at the moment, Captain Rock cried:

"That Sirr is a born fiend, and no mistake. See what he is at now."

Lord Edward cast his eyes back also, as he inquired:

"What is he at, captain?"

"He is trying to skirt around the side of the mountain, so as to head us off at the pass, sir. Hear his signal calling on some of those below to wait for him. Ah, why didn't I make sure of the rascal with a bullet instead of the bottle?"

"But we should be able to reach the pass before them, captain."

"Remember that they have the level road, sir, while we have the rugged mountain. I will take a short cut if we can."

They soon reached the top of the mountain, from whence they could see Major Sirr and his men pushing along below, with the evident intention of taking to the road again.

Captain Rock secured the other horse and led him along for awhile, saying:

"I will mount him when he rests a little, and then we will away to the pass."

"But why not take your own brave steed again, my good friend?"

"Because you will need him yet, sir, I fear. Keep a stiff rein on him now, and away we go for the pass."

The two fugitives could not make fast time across the rugged hills, as they had to descend and climb several steep paths on the journey over the range.

As they neared the pass, Captain Rock sprang from his horse and ascended a high rock, from whence he could get a clear view of the road below.

He had scarcely reached the top of the rock to peer over, when he darted down again, as he cried to Lord Edward:

"Gallop through as fast as the horse will take you, sir, and wheel to the right when you strike the road. Use your sword and pistols if opposed, and trust the rest to Blackbird. On, on, I say, and I am with you! Now for it, my hero!"

Blackbird dashed into the pass with Lord Edward as if understanding the words of his master, and the Whiteboy spurred on his own steed to his utmost speed.

Two horsemen were stationed on the road near the mouth of the pass, while Major Sirr and a dozen dragoons dashed on from the left toward it.

"Lord Edward," cried the Whiteboy, as they neared the road, "give the fellows before you a bullet apiece the moment you see them, and leave me to deal with the others. Now is your chance, and then on with you."

The dragoons at the mouth of the pass perceived the fugitives at the moment, and they sent up a shout as they spurred forward to intercept them.

Major Sirr and his party answered the shout as they urged on their steeds to gain the pass before the fugitives.

Holding the bridle in his mouth, Lord Edward took aim at one of the dragoons, and the man fell from his horse, crying:

"I am done for."

The Irish leader dashed the empty pistol at the other dragoon, and the man fell also, but without uttering a cry.

"Well done, sir," yelled Captain Rock, as he spurred on his own horse. "Away to the right now, and don't wait for me, on your life. Away, away, Blackbird, and get into your full swing."

The black horse did dash along at a lightning speed, while Major Sirr and his men rode full at Captain Rock, the fierce man-hunter yelling:

"Down with the villain! Press on, press on after the other!"

The gallant Whiteboy could only reach the road about ten yards ahead of the dragoons, and he had barely time to fire his pistol at the foremost, when the good horse under him received a bullet in one of the hind legs, and he fell on the ground.

Captain Rock was on his feet almost on the instant, and he sprang to the side of the road just as two of the foremost dragoons dashed at him with their sabres uplifted, while one of them yelled:

"Down with the blasted rebel!"

Captain Rock darted aside to avoid the blows, bringing his own sword in play at the same moment, and one of the dra-

goons rolled to the ground, while along the road dashed the riderless horse.

Making a dart at the other rider, the fearless Whiteboy struck him from the saddle and sprang on the horse himself without delaying his course in the least.

A furious yell burst from Major Sirr and his fellows, and they sent a last volley from their pistols after the daring Whiteboy as he dashed along on the dragoon's horse, while he rang out his defiance, crying:

"You haven't got me yet, you infernal hounds, and you won't, either."

Lord Edward soon pulled up on not finding the Whiteboy after him, and he then galloped back at full speed, as he said to himself:

"What a nice comrade I am, to leave the brave fellow in the lurch!"

The riderless horse dashed toward him at this moment, and then on after it rode Captain Rock at headlong speed, yelling:

"About face and away again, sir. Are you mad, that you turn back for me?"

"I was a coward to leave you at all, my brave friend, but—"

"On, on, Blackbird," cried the Whiteboy, as he heard the yelling dragoons rattling on close behind them. "Now is the time for your full swing in earnest."

Blackbird did dash on again, while Captain Rock spurred his steed for dear life, while he looked back and muttered:

"I think this is the best horse in the race, after Blackbird, and I'll get all I can out of him, and no mistake."

Every good horseman knows that certain jockeys have a knack of getting the best speed out of a good animal, and Captain Rock was an expert in horse flesh.

While he could not hope to keep up with Blackbird at his best speed, he did expect to humor the good horse under him, so that he could outstrip the heavy dragoons in a long race.

As Lord Edward had not the slightest idea of deserting his brave friend at that critical time, he soon drew up again, until Captain Rock was close behind him, as he cried:

"I will not fly from you, captain, and do not ask me to do so. Why, we are gaining on the rascals as it is."

"This is not a bad one, sir; but I wish you would dash on to the side road I mentioned, while I lead the hounds off on a wrong scent."

"We will push on together now, friend," answered Lord Edward, in decided tones. "We have the wooded country beyond, and we can soon give the villains the slip."

The two brave men did push on together, and they baffled the pursuers before proceeding many miles on the journey.

Early on the following morning they reached a friendly tavern on one of the side roads on the outskirts of Dublin, and the weary horses were put to rest in the stable, while Lord Edward hastened to change his disguise in order to proceed to his quarters in the city.

"Captain Rock declared that he would rest in the tavern during the day, and start back to join his men at nightfall.

On bidding Lord Edward farewell, the daring Whiteboy said:

"For goodness' sake, my lord, beware of that Major Sirr, as he is the keenest bloodhound I ever met in my life."

"I will heed your advice, my brave friend," rejoined the Irish leader. "In a week from now I hope to take the field at the head of an Irish army, and then I will defy all the English spies in Ireland."

"And I will be ready to join you, sir, with over a hundred true men. In the meantime I will seize all the arms I can."

"That is what we need most. Farewell for awhile, and be assured that I will never forget Captain Rock and his Whiteboys."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WHITEBOY'S PERIL.

Captain Rock had two objects in remaining near Dublin until evening.

He wished to give his horse a good rest, and he desired the shelter of the darkness to start out on the return journey.

Having rested all day, the young Whiteboy rigged himself up in the lively attire of a horse jockey, and at the dusk of the evening he went out to the stable to see that the horses were prepared for the road, as he then intended to take the dragoon's charger back to the mountain with him.

While Captain Rock was talking to the hostler in the stable-yard a gentleman came out from the tavern and addressed him, saying:

"I understand that you have a couple of good horses here to dispose of?"

The young Whiteboy gave a searching glance at the gentleman as he replied:

"I have only one to sell, as the other is bespoke already, sir."

"Let me see the horse for sale."

They walked to the stable, and Captain Rock pointed out the animal taken from the dragoon as he remarked:

"There he is, sir, and he's as fine a roadster as you ever laid your eyes on."

The stranger cast a glance at the horse in question, and then turned to admire Blackbird as he asked:

"Are you certain that you cannot sell me this horse, my good fellow?"

"Not for a fortune, sir, as he is bespoke by Lord Purcill of Killarney."

"Where did you get him?"

"Over in England, sir."

After a little bargaining, the gentleman purchased the horse, and then rode away on him toward the city.

A closed carriage with a guard of six dragoons drove up to the tavern soon after, and just as the Whiteboy was about to mount his black steed for the return journey.

Casting a glance out at the carriage, Captain Rock saw an officer leading a veiled lady from it to the tavern, and he started a little when he noticed that the portly man doing the honors was Colonel Tallon.

"Who in the mischief is the lady, and what can they be stopping here for?" the Whiteboy asked himself, feeling more than a little interested at the unexpected meeting. "Hang me if I mustn't see what is going on."

Turning to the hostler, who was an old acquaintance, he said:

"Lead my horse out quietly to the little grove by the river, Bat, as if you were taking him for a drink. Then tie him to a sapling and come back to me. Don't let the dragoons notice you, my boy."

"Never fear that, captain, as I'll take him back here by the lane. The rascals are going to stay awhile, I think."

As Captain Rock was well disguised with a red wig and a beard of the same color, he strolled boldly into the barroom of the tavern, where some of the dragoons had already entered.

Flourishing his heavy riding whip in an unconcerned manner, the Whiteboy advanced to the bar and called for a glass of brandy, winking to the landlord at the same time, as if to say:

"I want a few quiet words with you."

The landlord was summoned to an upper room on the instant, and his son had to wait on the dragoons and the Whiteboy.

While sipping his brandy, Captain Rock could understand that the soldiers were going to remain at the tavern for the

night, and that the landlord had just been summoned to arrange with Colonel Tallon, who was not able to proceed to the city with the lady in his charge.

"Who is the lady?" Captain Rock asked himself, bending his ear to listen to every word dropped by the dragoons, while he appeared to be perfectly indifferent to their talk.

But the dragoons did not seem inclined to talk about the lady, and, having sipped his brandy, the Whiteboy strolled out to the stable again, where the hostler was now busy with the horses of the dragoons.

Going quietly up to the hostler, Captain Rock whispered to him:

"Take this shilling and go in for a drink for yourself. Whisper to your master that I want to see him out here as soon as possible."

"More power to you, captain. I left the horse as quiet as a lamb, with only a cord to hold him, and I'll have the master out in a jiffy."

The landlord came out to the stable soon after, and Captain Rock drew him aside as he asked:

"Faith, I can't say, sir, but the poor thing appears to be in sore trouble. The old rascal is keeping her a kind of prisoner like."

"Is she young or old?"

"She is a young lady, captain, and as purty a one as ever you laid your eyes on."

"Is she dark or fair?"

"She is dark, faith, with big, sad eyes that would fairly burn a hole through one's heart."

"See here, Donnelly, I want you or your wife to whisper a few words to the young lady, as I think she is a dear friend of mine."

"My wife can manage it, captain, as she is making the tea for her now. What will she say to the young lady?"

"Ask her if her name is Barrington."

"What else, sir?"

"Then whisper to her that Captain Rock is not far away. Is Colonel Tallon going to take tea with her?"

"To be sure, sir. He is watching her as a cat would watch a mouse."

"Well, Donnelly, if she is the lady I know the mouse will soon slip away, and you must give me a hand in the matter."

"A pair of them, captain, and a heart with them as true as steel."

"Then go in and tell your wife to be very cautious in the matter."

The landlord hastened in, and Captain Rock waited impatiently, as he muttered to himself:

"Can it be that the villain has taken Julia Barrington, and that he is bringing her here to marry her. If it is so I'll take her back with me at all hazards."

The impatient Whiteboy had to wait in the stable for some time before the landlord appeared again, and then his worst suspicions were confirmed.

The young lady was Julia Barrington, and Colonel Tallon was keeping her as a prisoner.

"Oh, captain," continued the landlord, "when my wife whispered to the darling that you were near she dropped her cup of tea over her gown, she was that flurried, and she then whispered to my wife that she would depend on you and Blackbird to save her again."

"And we will save her, Donnelly," answered Captain Rock, with a fierce frown. "You will get the dragoons as drunk as fools."

"That's not an easy matter, captain, as they are the devil's own chaps for the whisky and the ale. If I had only a little doctor's stuff now that wouldn't hurt them much."

"I'll supply you with a harmless drug that will set them all

to sleep, and you must put a little in the colonel's drink also."

"That I will, captain. As they are all heavy drinkers they can only blame themselves if they sleep sound until morning."

"Don't give the dose to the colonel until I tell you," said Captain Rock, who had formed a plan for the rescue of Julia and for the punishment of her abductor, and I want you to get me about six or seven of the stout lads and true to help me."

"You can have over twenty as soon as you like, captain, and they'll all be glad enough of a chance to get a whack at the soldiers."

Having thus arranged for the rescue, Captain Rock entered the tavern again to assist the landlord in disposing of the dragoons, whom he invited to drink at his expense, an invitation to which the soldiers readily responded.

While the Whiteboy was thus engaged another party of mounted men rode up to the tavern at full speed, and into the barroom rushed Major Sirr and the gentleman who had purchased the horse from the Whiteboy, followed by a dozen dragoons.

"There's the jockey who sold me the horse!" cried the gentleman, as he pointed to Captain Rock on the instant.

The dragoons surrounded the disguised rebel before he could move to the back door, and Major Sirr advanced on him with a scowling face as he demanded:

"Where did you get the horse you just sold this gentleman, you rascal?"

The bold Whiteboy did not appear to be the least alarmed as he promptly answered:

"I bought him from an officer in the city this morning, sir."

"Who was that officer?"

"Lieutenant Danvers of the dragoons."

"Confound you, you rascal, you told me you brought the horses from England!" cried the gentleman, in angry tones.

"Begging your pardon, sir. I said that I brought the other horse from England."

"Where is the other horse?" demanded Major Sirr, who was watching the Whiteboy with the keenest attention.

"I just sent him off to Lord Purcill, sir, who sent me to England for him. What is wrong with the horse I sold this gentleman?"

"He's a government horse, you rascal," replied Major Sirr, "and he was stolen from a dragoon only last night. Where in Dublin did you meet this Lieutenant Danvers?"

"I met him at the Black Bull Tavern, on Kildare street, sir. Sure he was an officer and in full uniform."

"Well, you'll go back with us and see if you can't find him," cried Major Sirr. "Who was with the officer at the time?"

"A big, strapping dragoon, sir. I'll go back with you and welcome, as I was going into the city in any case."

"Was the dragoon mounted?"

"He had a fine dark bay horse, sir, but he wasn't for sale."

"No, I don't suppose he was," grunted Major Sirr, as he motioned to the dragoons to seize the prisoner. "Landlord, do you know this man?"

"Is it me know Larry Foley, major? Sure there isn't a gossoon from here to Cork that doesn't know him, and would go bail for his honesty in the bargain."

"If the gentleman can prove that the horse was stolen," said the disguised Whiteboy, drawing out his purse, "I am willing to give him back his money, as I'll soon find the officer who sold him to me."

"If you find him you can keep the money," said Major Sirr, with a grim smile. "Who else have you stopping here now, landlord?"

"Colonel Tallon is taking tea upstairs with a young lady relative of his, major."

"Colonel Tallon here from Wexford! Well, I declare, but that is news. Soldiers, surround the house on all sides, and shoot down any one who attempts to escape. This rascal is the famous Captain Rock, or I am much mistaken, and the arch-traitor, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, is in the house. Guard this fellow as you would your lives, men."

The dragoons had seized Captain Rock, who protested that he was Larry Foley, an honest horse-dealer; and the major then turned and stared at the tipsy soldiers who had accompanied Colonel Tallon.

The fellows were all seated asleep at the tables as the drugged liquor had taken full effect.

"Cunning dogs," muttered the major, as he grinned with delight. "They are playing drunk so as to try and humbug me; but I am too sharp for them."

Giving orders to his men to seize and bind the sleepers, whom he believed to be Whiteboys in disguise, Major Sirr then called on six of his fellows to follow him, while he addressed the landlord, with a mocking smile, saying:

"Now lead us up to the room where Colonel Tallon is taking his tea. Don't dare give a sign of warning. I know that your guest above is the great rebel Lord Edward Fitzgerald."

CHAPTER X.

MAJOR SIRR IN A MUDDLE.

The landlord of the tavern was a wag in his way, and he was highly amused at the idea of Major Sirr taking the guest upstairs for Lord Edward Fitzgerald, but he only grinned to himself, as he muttered:

"Glory be to goodness, but 'tis a nice muddle the man-hunter is getting into."

Captain Rock was highly delighted at the turn of affairs, even though he was a prisoner, as he said to himself:

"The major will get into a nice scrape with Colonel Tallon, and then will be my chance to get off with Julia."

The bold outlaw was not at all alarmed over his arrest, as he had been in the clutches of the enemy ere then, and when there was not the least doubt as to his identity.

He felt confident that Major Sirr was acting at haphazard when he denounced him as Captain Rock; and the generous Whiteboy was resolved to bear out the character of a horse jockey, if it was only to uphold the friendly landlord in his manly stand.

As Captain Rock had often assumed that character while attending fairs and races, he was well known by several gentlemen in the neighborhood to whom he had sold horses, and he had little doubt of their intercession in his behalf if occasion required.

But the daring Whiteboy could not afford to wait until the morning for his release, as it was necessary to rescue Julia that night, and then bear her away from Dublin.

And that rescue must be effected, for the good landlord's sake, without betraying the fact that he was really Captain Rock.

When the Whiteboy witnessed the seizure of the drunken dragoons as members of his own band in disguise, he could scarcely refrain from bursting out into a fit of laughter, while he said to himself:

"If this isn't the richest joke I ever struck in my life, may I never draw sword on a redcoat again. On my soul, but I'd give Blackbird himself to be looking at Major Sirr when he bursts in on Colonel Tallon to arrest him as Lord Edward."

The entrance of the dragoons and the arrest in the barroom did not make much of a stir in the tavern; and when the landlord led Major Sirr and his men up the stairs in quest of the great Irish leader, the man-hunters moved as silently as possible.

Lord Edward was married to a beautiful French lady, who was then sharing his fortunes in Ireland; and when the landlord mentioned that a young dame was taking tea with his guest, Major Sirr felt more confident that the great Irish leader was in his grasp.

The merry landlord's heart was bounding with suppressed humor, and a broad grin was on his manly face as he stole up the stairs ahead of the brutal major, while he said to himself:

"Talk about play-acting, but this beats all I ever saw on the stage. I'll soon burst if I don't get a chance to laugh out."

When they gained the head of the stairs, the landlord put on a solemn face, and pointed to a door as he whispered to Major Sirr:

"'Tis in there he is, major, with the fine young lady."

Major Sirr nodded an approval and waved the landlord aside.

Then turning to the dragoons, he whispered to them as he examined his pistol:

"Rush in after me."

When Julia Barrington left Captain Rock on the mountain-side, as the young Whiteboy started out to escort Lord Edward, the young girl hastened to a rendezvous on the mountain with the other outlaws.

Early on the following morning Julia hastened down to a neighboring village to procure some necessary articles.

As she wore a peasant's cloak and cap over her more costly dress, and she had discolored her hands and face, she did not imagine that she would attract any attention from the soldiers quartered in the village.

Captain Graham was out on duty that morning, however, and he saw and recognized the disguised girl.

Forgetting the debt he owed to Captain Rock, the base rascal seized Julia and bore her away to Colonel Tallon's mansion, as he said:

"My dear girl, I have imperative orders to arrest you wherever I find you."

Julia cast a look of scorn at the cowardly wretch as she replied:

"Mark my words, sir, you will not escape so easily when Captain Rock meets you again."

Colonel Tallon was rejoiced when he was informed that Julia was in his power again, and he resolved to bear her away to Dublin, fearing that the bold Whiteboy leader would soon rescue her if they remained in that neighborhood.

As Julia was a brave, spirited girl, and as she had full faith in her gallant Whiteboy friend, she did not pine or trouble much over her seizure at first; but when she found herself on the road to Dublin, she became more alarmed for the future.

Colonel Tallon was her second cousin, he had some claims on her as a guardian, and he was all-powerful with the rulers in Dublin, while she had good reason to know that he was a bold, unscrupulous rascal.

On arriving at the tavern Julia was sad enough, as the landlord stated, but she was not very sullen or poutish with the colonel.

When the landlady gave her the hint that the bold outlaw was close at hand, Julia became more lively, and Colonel Tallon was somewhat surprised to see a merry smile on her beautiful face, while she also conversed with him with apparent freedom for the first time.

The evening meal was drawing to a close, and the colonel was in high glee while contemplating the fair girl before him, as he said to her:

"My dear Julia, I am glad to see that you are looking at our affairs in the right light. You know that I always intended to make you my wife, and that our marriage will settle all dispute about the estate."

The young girl gave an arch smile as she responded in lively tones:

"You adopt a novel style of courtship, colonel, carrying me off in this manner."

"Egad, my dear girl, it is the Irish style, you know. I was afraid that blasted Whiteboy would play the game if I didn't."

"Captain Rock has no notion of the kind, I am sure, and——"

The door was burst in on the moment, and in rushed Major Sirr, yelling:

"Shoot him down if he offers to raise a hand. Surrender, Lord Edward, in the name of the king, or you are a dead man."

Colonel Tallon's back was turned to the door as he sat at the table confronting Julia, and Major Sirr had him seized by the collar and with a pistol at his head before he could turn round or utter a word.

The dragoons rushed in almost at the same moment and laid violent hands on the supposed Irish leader, as they yelled:

"Down with the blasted rebel!"

Julia was a quick-witted girl, and she took in the situation almost on the instant, while she also resolved to take advantage of the unlooked-for incident in her own behalf.

Before the astounded colonel could utter a word or turn his head to confront Major Sirr the lively girl sprang up from the chair and blew out the candles on the table crying:

"To the window, my lord!"

The blowing out of the light served as an excuse for the brutal major, who had secret orders from his masters to slay Lord Edward at the first favorable opportunity offered.

Firing his pistol point-blank at the colonel's head, Major Sirr yelled:

"The rebel resists! Slay the dog without mercy, as he is armed to the teeth!"

The bullet struck the astounded English officer on the back of the head, and it then glanced off and hit one of the dragoons on the hand, as he was grasping the colonel.

Colonel Tallon fell from his chair on the floor, dragging the dragoon and Major Sirr down with him as he yelled in fearful tones:

"Dang your eyes, you are murdering a British officer! I am Colonel Tallon!"

The dragoons were pounding away at their victim in the dark, and Major Sirr was feeling for a chance to plunge a dagger into his breast, when the familiar tones of the colonel burst on his astonished ears, and he released his grasp on the instant, crying:

"Hold! hold! This is an infernal blunder, I fear. Not another blow! A light here on the instant, blast my eyes!"

"I'll make you suffer for this outrageous outrage, dang your eyes!" yelled the colonel, as he struck out with all the fury of a madman. "I'll have blood for this, and on the instant. Help, there!—treachery! Dragoons, to the rescue of your colonel! I am murdered in cold blood! My head—my head is blown off!"

And the stout colonel kicked and struck out as he yelled, while they were all sprawling on the floor in the utmost confusion.

At that moment the highly-amused landlord rushed into the room with a candle in his hand as he yelled:

"Murder alive, major, didn't I tell ye it was Colonel Tallon was in it? But ye wouldn't believe a word I said. Oh, murder! murder!—the colonel is murdered outright!"

"I'll kill somebody else before I die!" yelled the colonel, as he struck Major Sirr a fearful blow in the face. "My sword and pistols, till I slay the rascals!"

The muddled major regained his feet and dashed to the door, yelling:

"Beg pardon, colonel, as it was all an infernal muddle, I swear."

"I'll muddle you, you scoundrel. Where are my pistols? You infernal hounds, didn't you know that I am your superior officer."

The last words were addressed to the mortified dragoons as they scrambled out of the room after the major.

Placing the candlestick on the table, the delighted landlord raised the infuriated colonel from the floor, as he cried:

"Oh, colonel, dear, the major wouldn't hear to me when I told him it was yourself was in here with a lady. Sure he has your men below all bound like thieves besides, swearing they are Captain Rock's Whiteboys. Oh, what a hole in your head."

"I'll put a hole in his heart, the infernal scoundrel," yelled the colonel, as he dashed out into the hall and then down the stairs, with his sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. "Where are you, Major Sirr?"

The major had regained the barroom, and he hastened to surround himself with his own dragoons, as he yelled out in reply:

"I beg a thousand pardons, Colonel Tallon, and I will explain the mistake."

Bursting into the barroom like a wounded lion, and with blood streaming all over his head and face, the infuriated colonel dashed at the trembling major, crying:

"I'll have your life the first, you treacherous, spying, sneaking hound."

"Keep him back, hold him off! Colonel Tallon, I will give you the satisfaction of a gentleman, if you will not hear reason."

As the dragoons formed a circle around the major, the angry colonel could not get at him and he stormed around the dragoons as he yelled in reply:

"Yes, come out and give me the satisfaction due an officer, you contemptible panderer to the hangman. Hang me, no! I won't fight with such a low, contemptible cur, but I'll shoot you down as I would a mad dog. Make way there!"

And Colonel Tallon made every effort to get a shot at the blundering major, who kept ducking his head behind the laughing dragoons, while he protested:

"On my honor, colonel, I had the best of reason for supposing that I was attacking the infamous Irish rebel leader, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and——"

"Do I resemble the blasted Irish rebel, you blundering hound?"

"Your back was turned to me, sir, and——"

"My face is turned to you now, hang your infernal eyes, and come out here and fight me like a man. Why did you dare shoot me in the head here, when I had not raised a hand to resist you?"

"The lights were blown out, and we expected a desperate resistance, my dear colonel. We had already secured the notorious Captain Rock there, and six of his men disguised as dragoons, and we expect there are more of the Whiteboys lying in wait in the neighborhood."

The excited colonel was growing a little calmer, as he felt that he had had a narrow escape from death, while the wound at the back of his head was merely a scratch.

Glancing down at the drunken dragoons, who were lying bound on the floor, and recognizing them as the fellows who had escorted the carriage from his country mansion, he burst out into an uproarious fit of laughter, and then yelled out in sarcastic tones:

"Egad, Major Sirr, you are the king of man-hunters. I will get up a petition to the king, and have you sent to India to catch all the Sepoys who may revolt there. Ireland is too small a place for one of your extraordinary powers. Oh, you are a treasure to the king and to the government!"

The blundering major writhed under the lashing, while he exclaimed:

"Do you mean to say that those drunken rascals are not Whiteboys in disguise, colonel?"

"Egad, no! If I am Lord Edward, they must be Whiteboys, although they are six of the best dragoons in my own regiment, and they have just escorted me from my country seat in Wexford. Ha, ha, ha! I understand you also captured the famous Captain Rock himself, my prince of man-hunters. Where is the infernal rascal?"

"There he is, colonel, and I feel certain I have made no mistake in that quarter."

Captain Rock was still in the grasp of the dragoons, and you may be certain he was enjoying the scene before him.

When Major Sirr pointed him out there was a sly smile on the face of the disguised Whiteboy, and he cried out in jovial tones:

"How do you do, Colonel Tallon? Did the bay hunter I sold you at Clontarf last month turn out as well as I said?"

Colonel Tallon advanced and stared at the prisoner ere he cried:

"Hello, Larry Foley! and is it you? Where is Captain Rock, Major Sirr?"

The blundering major was now thoroughly nonplussed, but he blustered forth:

"That fellow before me is the notorious Whiteboy, Colonel Tallon."

The colonel cast a scornful glance at the blunderer, and then another at the laughing horse jockey ere he burst forth in the most uproarious manner possible:

"Ha, ha, ha! Egad, if this isn't the richest thing I ever struck! The great Major Sirr, the famous hunter of the rebels, attempts to murder me as Lord Edward, he captures six of my tipsy dragoons for Whiteboys and arrests Larry Foley, the well-known horse jockey, as the famous Captain Rock! Oh, this is too much, too much! Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE INFAMOUS MAJOR IN MORE TROUBLE.

The Whiteboy leader laughed even louder than the colonel as he felt himself released by the amused soldiers, while the landlord stood at the door holding his shaking sides, his red face bursting with humor, as he cried:

"Be the Lord Harry, Larry Foley, but ye have a case for damages again' the major, for treating ye that way, after I swore to him that ye were yer own self and no mistake."

Captain Rock took the hint at once, and he turned on Major Sirr with a scowling brow, as he cried:

"I know I can have the law on you, Major Sirr, for daring to arrest me, but as I claim to be a gentleman, I demand satisfaction as such on the spot."

"That's it," cried the colonel, who was regaining his good humor at the total discomfiture of his blundering assailant. "I can't fight the fellow, but he must fight you. Yes, you are a better gentleman than he is, Foley, and I'll be your guarantee for it. Will you at him?"

"To be sure I will, colonel, with swords or pistols, as he likes, if you will do me the honor to act as my second."

"That I will, my good fellow. Come, major, I'll forgive you if you fight Mr. Foley, who associates with the best gentlemen in the country, as I can assure you."

"Yes, and I have fought with the major's betters," cried the pretended horse jockey. "I shouldn't say it myself, but I've stretched my man for half the cause you gave me."

Major Sirr was a bold, brazen scoundrel, and he soon recovered his full cheek after his scandalous defeats.

Putting on an air of bravado, he turned his scowling countenance on the Whiteboy, as he cried:

"Nonsense, fellow! I was performing my duty when I arrested you on suspicion. This gentleman is all to blame in the matter."

The gentleman who had purchased the horse from Captain Rock was an amused spectator of the scene throughout, and as he happened to be a fire-eater and a patriot, he then turned on the infamous major, crying:

"What is that you say, sir?"

"I say that you charged this fellow with selling you a stolen horse."

"Allow me to tell you, Major Sirr, that I happen to be a gentleman, and my name is Peter Eagan. When you say that I charged Mr. Foley here with selling a stolen horse, I declare that you are an infamous liar."

Major Sirr turned purple with rage at this fresh insult, and he strode toward the gentleman as if about to strike him, as he blustered forth:

"I'll make you answer for this, sir. The horse was stolen and he was caught in your possession. Hang me, I will fight you."

"You'll fight me first, major," cried the Whiteboy leader, "and Mr. Eagan can take what is left of you after I am done. By way of a stimulant to have at me, take that."

And the daring Whiteboy struck the major a smart blow in the face with his open hand.

Springing back a few steps the brutal bully drew his sword and made a rush on Captain Rock, as he yelled:

"I'll run you through the heart, I'll cut you into quarters for that blow, you infernal low puppy of a thieving jockey."

Colonel Tallon was still holding his sword in his hand, and Captain Rock made a spring and drew it from his grasp, crying:

"Keep off the dragoons, colonel, and I'll soon pay the hound for all he gave you."

"Fall back, men," cried the colonel, "and let the gentlemen fight it out."

The dragoons did fall back, as they had no love for the bullying major, and they were only too glad to obey the orders of a superior officer.

Major Sirr rushed at his opponent, believing that he had to contend with a civilian who had never handled a sword before, and his first object was to beat the weapon from Captain Rock's grasp and then chastise him at his pleasure thereafter.

The mischievous Whiteboy did handle the sword in the most clumsy manner, but he managed to ward off the blows aimed at his wrist, as he cried out:

"I'm not much used to the sword, but I can handle a black-thorn, and I'll give a taste of my work in that style."

Being still more assured that he had to deal with a greenhorn at sword practice, the bullying spy made some skillful thrusts and cuts, always aiming to disable his opponent's sword arm, while he kept crying:

"I'll hack your arms off and then your legs, you dog of a horsethief. I'll cut you in bits and serve you out to the hounds."

Captain Rock kept parrying the cuts and thrusts as he would blows aimed at him with a cudgel, while he said to himself:

"It won't do for me to show that I am a swordsman, or the rascal will suspect me again; and it won't do to slay him, or the dragoons will pounce on me; but I must give him a beating he will never forget. Oh, if I had only this chance on a fair field!"

Having defended himself successfully in his rough way for

a few minutes, to the great amusement of all the spectators, the disguised Whiteboy turned on the offensive, and attacked his blustering opponent with intense vigor.

Realizing that it would not do to display his skill, or give the major a serious wound, Captain Rock went at him hammer-and-tongs, as it were, dealing him rough blows with the flat of the sword on his breast, arms and legs, as he yelled aloud:

"Who's going to be cut to bits now? Where's the bully that was going to put a hole in my heart? How do you like that crack on the stomach, me bold major? Will I cut off his head with one whack?"

The infuriated major attempted to defend himself from the furious attacks, but he was powerless in the hands of the active and mischievous Whiteboy, while Colonel Tallon and all the others were fairly dancing with joy at the discomfiture of the victim.

Having at last received a tremendous crack on the side of the head, the major sprang back among the dragoons, and drawing a pistol he aimed it at his assailant as he yelled:

"You are set on to assassinate me, you blasted rebel dog, and I'll settle you!"

The brutal rascal fired on the instant, while Colonel Tallon exclaimed:

"Hold there, you infernal coward!"

The ball did not hit Captain Rock, however, as he dodged at the moment, but it did strike the arm of a dragoon, who staggered back, yelling:

"Hang my eyes, if I'm not done for!"

The pistol had scarcely exploded when Captain Rock sprang at the major and aimed a fierce blow at his head, crying:

"I'll have your life now, you treacherous hound! Ah, soldier, that was not fair to interfere in that way."

The blow aimed by the young Whiteboy would have settled the career of the infamous spy forever were it not that one of the dragoons warded it off with his sabre.

Still foaming with mortification and rage, Major Sirr pushed in among his dragoons, as he yelled to them:

"Down with that hound, as he is a rebel in disguise, and he was sent here to murder me. At the dog, I say."

Some of the dragons were making a rush at the young Whiteboy, who drew back to defend himself with the sword, when Colonel Tallon sprang before him, crying:

"Back, dragoons, back! Shame on you, Major Sirr, to thus assault a man who encountered you like a gentleman in fair fight."

Maddened beyond all control, the bullying major retorted, in angry tones:

"Mind your own affairs, Colonel Tallon, and I will attend to mine. I'll have you to understand that I am not under your orders, and that I serve a higher master than ever you will be."

"And I'll have you to understand, Major Sirr, that I will have you courtmartialed for your brutal assault on me to-night," cried the colonel, who was again in a furious rage. "You are a disgrace to the service."

"I wasn't captured by a few cowardly Whiteboys yet," sneered the major, who knew that his own dragoons were bound to obey him. "Arrest that rascal, men, as he is a rebel."

The dragoons were about to make another dash at the disguised Whiteboy, but he was not to be seen in the barroom.

At a signal from the landlord, Captain Rock had slipped out into the hallway while the officers were quarreling.

He was then met by the landlady, who whispered to him, saying:

"Come this way with me, as some one wants to see you."

The woman led Captain Rock down into the cellar, as she continued:

"The house is surrounded by the dragoons, and no one can pass out, but here's a hiding-place down here for you."

On entering the cellar, the woman opened a secret door, and Captain Rock entered into a small storeroom, used by the landlord for keeping illicit whisky, where he found Julia Barrington awaiting him.

After a warm greeting, the young girl gave her friend an account of her adventures, and concluded by saying:

"While the row was going on upstairs I stole out and down to the kitchen. As the house is surrounded by the dragoons, the landlady led me down here. Oh, won't Colonel Tallon be wild when he finds that I escaped!"

"He will, indeed; but I fear that he will then make friends with the rascally major, and they will burn the house down to find us," replied Captain Rock, with a serious smile.

"Would you advise me to go up to the colonel again until Major Sirr goes away?"

"Oh, no, no! You are out of his clutches now, and we will trust to fortune to get away. Would that we were out on my good horse! Let me think awhile, and we will baffle them yet."

Colonel Tallon was furious when he discovered that Julia had disappeared during the scuffle in the upper room, and he hastened to seek her all over the house, knowing that she could not escape therefrom while the dragoons had the place surrounded.

Major Sirr also proceeded to make a thorough search for the horse dealer.

The two rascally officers soon came together in the search, and a reconciliation was effected, on the understanding that the horse dealer should be given up to the major.

When the two rascals consulted together over the events of the night, the major, who was a keen-scented detective, remarked:

"Although you know the fellow as a horse dealer, colonel, I am still positive that he is also Captain Rock. The dark horse he retained is the famous steed the Whiteboy rides, as sure as I am a living man."

"Egad, major, but it strikes me now that you are right; and the girl must be concealed somewhere here in the house with the rebel rascal. How are we to discover them?"

"Leave that to me, colonel. Let us go and see the landlord, who is suspected of being a rebel, and we'll drag the truth out of him, or burn the house down over his head."

The landlord was then called, and the brutal major addressed him in angry tones, saying:

"See here, you rebel rascal, show us where Captain Rock and the young lady are concealed, or we'll burn your house down and take you to prison for aiding and concealing the leader of the Whiteboys."

The manly landlord rubbed his head as he replied with a deep sigh:

"It would be hard for me to show you where they are, major, when I am certain they both stole out of the house while you were rowing."

"Come—come, you lying scoundrel," cried the major, "we know they couldn't, as the dragoons were posted all around and they are on guard there still. If you do not show us where they are in five minutes your house will be in flames, and then we will have them out, or they will be burned alive. You know, fellow, that I always keep my word in such matters."

The brave landlord did know that the infamous spy was capable of carrying out his threat, and he felt that he was in a fearful predicament, while he said to himself:

"If I betray brave Captain Rock, they will hang him up, sure; and if I don't, he will be burned to death with the young lady."

CHAPTER XII.

THE WHITEBOY FLINGS OFF THE MASK.

While the true-hearted landlord was thus threatened by the crafty major, Captain Rock was forming a bold project in the secret cellar, and Julia Barrington was preparing to act with him.

The landlord was prepared to sacrifice everything for the leader of the Whiteboys, but he also feared that his silence would cause the death of his rebel friend and the young lady, as he knew that the angry Major Sirr would be only too glad of a chance to persecute any one suspected of favoring the patriots of Ireland at the time.

When the landlady of the house heard the threats made to her husband, she slipped quietly down into the cellar and opened the door of the secret closet, saying:

"Gracious goodness, captain, they are going to burn the house down over our heads if we don't give the pair of you up."

"Are they certain that we are in the house?" asked the Whiteboy.

"They seem to feel pretty sure of it."

"Do they know for certain that I am Captain Rock, ma'am?"

"Major Sirr is certain of it, captain, and he is bound to have you or burn the house over our heads. What will we do at all?"

Captain Rock reflected a few moments before he remarked, glancing at Julia:

"Then if we don't appear to them your house will be burnt down, anyway?"

"That's how the case stands, sir."

The active Whiteboy then cast his eyes around the vault as he said:

"If I mistake not, there's a small passage leading out of here?"

The landlady rolled aside a large barrel of whisky, and pointed to a small trap door as she replied in eager tones:

"There it is, captain, and it leads out to a cave on the bank of the river."

Captain Rock raised the trap door on the instant, and looked at the young girl as he asked:

"Will you come with me?"

"Indeed, I will," was the ready response of the brave young girl.

"Cover the trap after us, and keep the rascals from applying the torch as long as you can," said Captain Rock, as he descended into the passage with Julia.

The landlady hastened to roll the barrel back again while she muttered:

"The brave captain will save us after all."

"Are you willing to run a little risk with me in order to save the good people from being burned to the ground?"

"I'd be a great coward if I wouldn't," bravely answered the young girl.

The Whiteboy did not say another word until he led Julia out on the bank of the river, and he then remarked to her:

"Now to call an old friend."

The Whiteboy leader then sent forth a low but shrill whistle, which was responded to almost on the instant by a low neigh, and then the tramp of a horse was heard on the green sward near them, while the man said:

"Here comes Blackbird."

The good black horse was soon by the side of the daring Whiteboy, who fondled him around the neck as he muttered aloud:

"Now for a brave dash at the enemy, good Blackbird, and remember that you have a treasure on your back."

Without asking the young girl's permission, the outlaw

placed her on the front of the horse, and then sprang up behind her, saying:

"Here's for a bold dash to serve a true friend."

Without any more ado the daring Whiteboy faced the good horse out toward the road, and they were soon dashing by the tavern as he yelled aloud, in a voice that was heard by all inside:

"If you want Captain Rock, Major Sirr, here I am. Colonel Tallon, if you would win Miss Barrington, ride on after me and rescue her."

As the bold Whiteboy sent forth this challenge he drew up on the road for a few moments, and he only dashed on again when the astonished dragoons on guard outside made a rush at him.

Then away dashed the good horse like a dark thunder-cloud, while its gallant rider yelled back:

"Come on, you rascals, and see if there is a horse among you able to cope with my Blackbird."

Yells of rage burst from Major Sirr and Colonel Tallon as they heard the voice of the bold Whiteboy, while the latter was fairly dazed with astonishment when he perceived Julia Barrington seated on the horse before him.

Then there was mounting in furious haste, a scattering volley was sent after the fugitives, while the enraged colonel cried out:

"Aim low, and don't hit the lady."

Up toward the Wicklow mountain galloped the Whiteboy, and on after him trailed his enraged pursuers, who lost ground at every stride.

Major Sirr and Colonel Tallon led in the pursuit, hoping to run down the gallant black steed before them before his two birds could reach the shelter of the mountain passes.

The good landlord's house was spared, but would Captain Rock escape from his persistent foes?

When the fugitives had reached a point about halfway up the mountainside, a young man in the garb of a peasant sprang out before them and pointed a musket at Captain Rock, as he cried:

"Halt, there, and give an account of yourself."

The bold Whiteboy did pull on the instant, and he cast one sharp glance at the manly form before him ere he answered:

"If I mistake not, we are friends."

"What is your word, then?" demanded the sturdy peasant, without budging an inch, although he saw that the rider had his hand on a horse pistol.

"The good cause forever."

"Where do you come from?"

Captain Rock pointed back at his approaching pursuers as he replied:

"From out of the lion's mouth. Major Sirr and his bloodhounds are on my track."

The young peasant cast his eyes back also as he asked in more friendly tones:

"Then who are you at all?"

"I am sometimes known as Larry Foley, the horse dealer, but to-night I am Captain Rock. Are you my friend or foe?"

As the daring Whiteboy asked the question he suddenly drew his pistol and aimed it at the head of the young peasant.

The young stranger took off his hat on the instant and turned quickly into a mountain path as he cried:

"Follow me at once, brave friend of the true cause. I am known about here as Michael Dwyer."

Captain Rock turned into the mountain path after the young peasant as he whispered to Julia in confident tones:

"We are safe now, I think; and, if I mistake not, we'll give the rascals behind us a sharp tussle besides."

When Major Sirr saw the black horse and its rider disappearing from the road, he drew up his men in good order, while he addressed Colonel Tallon, saying:

"We must look out for an ambush, as this mountain is infested with rebels."

Some of the dragoons were then advanced as skirmishers, and the whole party, numbering over fifty in all, moved cautiously up the mountain road expecting an attack at any moment, while still being anxious to press on in pursuit of the famous and ever-daring Whiteboy.

The skirmishers had already passed the path where the fugitives had disappeared, when a rattling volley was suddenly poured down on the dragoons, while a manly voice rang out, crying:

"Down with the English bloodhounds."

Although somewhat prepared for the assault, the dragoons were thrown into utter confusion, and a dozen saddles were emptied by the bullets of their unseen foes before they could draw up in any order.

Colonel Tallon's horse was shot under him, and he was hurled to the side of the road with great force, as the animal fell.

The assault was scarcely made, however, when Major Sirr gave the order to retreat, and down the mountain road dashed the surviving dragoons, leaving their dead and wounded after them.

Colonel Tallon received a severe bruise on the temple from the shock of his fall, and when he recovered his senses again he found Captain Rock standing over him, crying:

"You are unlucky again, my gallant colonel, and I will not let you off so very easy this time."

The baffled colonel was then dragged up into the mountain path, and he soon found himself in a rocky rendezvous, where Julia Barrington and Captain Rock were surrounded by a host of rough but trusty friends, numbering about forty.

"These rebels of the mountain were under the lead of the young peasant called Michael Dwyer, who afterward became quite famous for his gallant exploits against the English."

Of course, Colonel Tallon was quite crestfallen at his fresh defeat, but he soon put on a bold face, as he addressed Captain Rock in blustering tones, saying:

"Well, sir, what are you going to do with me?"

The Whiteboy gave a slight and sly wink at young Dwyer, as he replied in savage tones:

"We'll hang you first, and then we'll cut you into quarters and sell your carcass to the butchers of Dublin. 'Tis too easy we are, as you deserve to be burned to death."

"Oh, spare the good man, for my sake," cried Julia, in mock pathetic tones. "I am his promised bride, you know."

"He must die, young lady," cried Captain Rock, "as he has broken his oath to me. You know why I spared his life before."

"Yes, yes, brave sir. It was for my sake, and you will grant me the favor again, as he is dearer to me even than life."

The merry girl spoke in such earnest and serious tones that her wicked cousin did not know whether to believe her or not, and he cast a loving glance at her saying:

"I will not plead for my own life, as it is beneath the dignity of a soldier, but——"

"Shame on you, you cowardly hound," interrupted the young girl, changing her tone and manner on the instant. "You speak of the dignity of a soldier after the manner in which you have treated me. Captain Rock, put him to death, and I will not raise even my little finger in his favor, the base hound."

"Then he will die, Miss Barrington, and in short order at that, as I have just received news that compels me to hasten back to Dublin as fast as I can. Have you a stout rope, my good friends?"

Four or five of the rebels hastened to procure the rope on the instant, while the cowardly poltroon fell on his knees, crying:

"Oh, spare my life, good Captain Rock, and I will pay you a large ransom."

"Not for all the gold in the English treasury, you contemptible dog."

"But I am an officer, and I claim all the rights of a prisoner of war."

"What rights or mercy do you show to the unfortunate Irish rebels who may fall into your hands, you vile tyrant?"

The outlaws soon returned with a stout rope, and it was then secured around the trembling prisoner's neck, while he begged for mercy in the most piteous manner.

"Fling the dog over the cliff," cried Captain Rock, "and I only wish that we had the scoundrel Major Sirr here to share his fate. Do you object, brave Dwyer?"

"Not I, my gallant friend from Wexford," promptly answered the Wicklow hero.

They were dragging the wretched man toward a steep cliff, when Julia Barrington approached her rescuer and caught his arm as she asked, in low and very earnest tones:

"Are you in earnest, Captain Rock?"

"Why not, miss? Does not the rascal deserve a thousand deaths?"

The young girl placed her mouth to the Whiteboy's ear, as she answered:

"That is true, my true friend, but can you forget that he is your half-brother?"

Captain Rock started back in amazement and stared at Julia as he asked:

"Did you know that? True, true, I must not forget that we had the same mother, though the scoundrel betrayed my good father."

And the Whiteboy leader darted away to save the wretched prisoner, just as the rebels of the mountain were about to hurl him over the high cliff.

Julia Barrington was the only one who heard Captain Rock's last words, and she gazed after him with admiration as she muttered to herself:

"The noble man does not know that I saw him praying over his father's grave."

After staying the execution, Captain Rock did not speak a word to the prisoner, but he turned to Michael Dwyer, as he said to him:

"Do not injure that hound, but keep him a safe prisoner. Now let us to Dublin, to strike a good blow for the noble Lord Edward."

Colonel Tallon was soon placed in a prison where he had very few luxuries, and the Whiteboy and about thirty of his new friends started for Dublin in different disguises, taking Julia Barrington and another young lady with them.

That other young lady was the faithful young French wife of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had sought Michael Dwyer in his mountain retreat in disguise that evening, for the purpose of leaving him an important message from her noble husband.

Julia Barrington had also assumed the disguise of an aged peasant woman on her return to the city, but she changed her costume on arriving at the home of Lady Fitzgerald, as will appear hereafter.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAIL OF A BLOODHOUND.

It is said that a true bloodhound will never pause in the pursuit of a victim until he either effects his object or falls helpless from sheer exhaustion.

Then the notorious Major Sirr could well claim to be of the true breed of that species of ferocious animals, as he was untiring in his pursuit of the Irish rebels, and more especially did

he seek the death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, against whom he had an old grudge.

After his defeat on the mountainside, the brutal major hastened back to Dublin in a fearful state of mind.

The punishment he had received at the tavern, as well as the signal repulse on the mountain, had embittered him all the more, and he swore over and over again that he would hunt Captain Rock and the brave Lord Edward to death.

It was about nine when the bloodhound returned to his headquarters in the city, when he received important information.

Having an army of spies in his employ, one of those wretches informed him that Lord Edward would attend a meeting of the Dublin's patriots at a quiet rendezvous on Usher's Island that night.

Major Sirr then collected a large force of British soldiers and posted them at a place on Thomas street, with the view of intercepting Lord Edward and his friends on their return from the island.

The troops under Major Sirr were disguised as mechanics; they moved to the place of meeting in twos and threes, and they were all armed with short swords and pistols.

The meeting of the patriots did take place on Usher's Island, Lord Edward presided over it, and it was then decided that a general rising of the Irish people should take place five nights thereafter.

Michael Dwyer and Captain Rock attended that meeting also, for the purpose of escorting their beloved leader back to his resting place for the night, as an attack on him was feared.

Just at the close of the meeting a ragged lad with a very soiled face approached Captain Rock, spoke a few words into his ear, and handed him a small note at the same time.

The young Whiteboy clasped the hand of the ragged messenger, glanced at the direction on the note, and then approached Lord Edward, saying:

"I think this is from a dear friend of yours, Lord Edward."

The Irish leader read the note hastily, tore it up on the instant, and the martial fire of his race lightened his noble eyes as he turned again to Captain Rock and asked:

"About how many men do you think we can muster on the moment, brave captain?"

"About two hundred, my lord."

"My old friend, Major Sirr, is lying in wait for me at a point on Thomas street with about three hundred of his men. Would it not be well to try a brush with him?"

"By all means, general," was the ready response from the brave Whiteboy, "more especially as we cannot retreat by any other route without the boats. Will we at them?"

Lord Edward then consulted with Captain Rock and a few of his other leading friends, and it was fully decided to turn the table on Major Sirr by giving him an unexpected surprise.

The Irish leader then wrote a short note in French and handed it to Captain Rock, saying:

"Will your messenger be kind enough to return from whence he came with that?"

"Certainly, sir."

Captain Rock hastened over to the ragged lad, who was still in waiting, and asked him in soft tones:

"Will you be safe in returning with this?"

"Perfectly safe, my friend."

Captain Rock pressed the hand of the lad again, and the latter darted away from the meeting place, placing the note in his old cap as he said to himself, with a merry smile:

"They can never suspect me of bearing messages between Lord Edward and his noble wife."

The lively lad was whistling a merry Irish air, when he was suddenly seized by a rude hand and dragged into a hallway of a house, while a gruff voice fell on his ear, saying:

"Where do you come from, you little rascal?"

The gruff voice alone was enough to tell the lad that he was in the grasp of the notorious Major Sirr, but he at once replied:

"What are you taking me for? Is it any harm to go to a boxing match, I'd like to know?"

"Where was the boxing match?" demanded the gruff major.

"On Usher's Island, of course."

Major Sirr shook the lad more roughly than before as he asked:

"Come now, were there many at the boxing match, you lying rascal?"

"Lots of us, to be sure."

"Any of the big guns there?"

"Slathers of them. Sure the lord mayor himself was there and the Duke of Leinster."

The major shook the lad again as he said in threatening tones:

"If you try to humbug me I'll cut you within an inch of your life. What time did the match break up?"

"What are ye at all, to be at a poor lad in this way? 'Tis more than an hour ago since the last tussle was over."

"I am an officer, on the lookout for some thieves who were at the match. If you don't answer me fair I'll take you in."

The lad pretended to cry as he replied:

"Sure I didn't do anything, and 'tis the gospel truth I am telling ye. Was it Jack Brown, of the Coal quay, ye are after?"

"Yes, he is one of them," answered the major. "Was he there?"

"To be sure, sir, and as large as life at that. He is there still, I know."

"How do you know?"

"Because there's a lot of them stopped for a sport of some kind that they wouldn't let us youngsters see at all. If you don't believe me, sure you can go and see."

The cunning major did believe the lad, and he sent him on his way without further questioning, as he said to himself:

"I know the sport they are at, but I will soon give them better fun."

The ragged lad ran along the street for some blocks, and he then turned into a tavern, as he muttered to himself:

"I think I tricked the wretch of a spy that time, and I may thank my former visits to Dublin for being able to do so."

In the back room of the tavern a handsome young gentleman, wearing a beard and eyeglasses awaited the lad.

As the latter approached the table, the young gent anxiously inquired, speaking in low tones and with a foreign accent:

"Well, my boy, did you succeed in getting to our friends?"

"That I did, and here's the answer."

The young gent read it eagerly, and then sprang up, exclaiming:

"You are brave, indeed, but we must do more to-night; our friends are going to fight, and we must hasten to get them aid and take the enemy in the rear. Hasten out to the rendezvous with me."

The young gent and the ragged lad led the way along the dark street, while the former whispered to the other:

"Did they appear confident of the result?"

"Very confident, indeed, if we can only attract the rascals a little."

"And we will, my sweet friend. My noble husband must not be taken by the brutal English bloodhound."

The speaker was the faithful French wife of the Irish leader, and the ragged lad was no other than Julia Barrington.

CHAPTER XIV.

BAFFLING THE BLOODHOUND.

It was after midnight when Lord Edward and his friends moved out of the island in small parties, and Captain Rock kept close to his leader as they walked toward the spot where Major Sirr was lying in ambush for them.

As Lord Edward and seven or eight friends neared the ambush not more than five of the disguised English soldiers could be seen on the corner of the street, and they were strolling to and fro as if in search of a tavern or other resting place.

Two of the patriot scouts managed to return to report to their leader by a narrow lane, and Lord Edward was delighted to hear that he had aid in front as well as in rear.

His brave wife and her friends were ready to dash at Major Sirr's party at the first signal of the conflict.

Anticipating an easy surprise, the brutal spy at length saw Lord Edward approaching with his friends, and he gave the signal to his fellows to make ready for the assault.

The Irish leader was passing the door where his enemy was watching him when the latter rushed out with about twenty of his men. Presenting a pistol at the head of Lord Edward, Major Sirr cried:

"I arrest you in the name of the king, Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Seize the others, and shoot down all who may resist. At them, men, and show no quarter. Fury take you!"

When Lord Edward was thus assailed he did not raise a hand, but glared at the spy before him with intense scorn.

Captain Rock was not idle, however, as he at once struck the major's pistol up in the air, dealing him a blow in the head at the same moment with a short club.

Major Sirr fell on the ground uttering a cry of rage, while his immediate followers set on Lord Edward and his friends.

The major's pistol exploded in the air, and the shot was a signal for the English soldiers to dash out from their lurking places.

Lord Edward sent forth his war cry almost at the same moment, drawing a short sword at the same time, and setting on his foes with great gallantry as he cried:

"Down with English foes."

His friends heard that cry and they rallied to his side from front and rear, attacking the English soldiers with great spirit, and dealing death wounds on every side.

The English were totally unprepared for such a combined and desperate resistance on the part of Lord Edward and his followers, and after a short struggle they turned and fled on all sides, leaving several of their dead and wounded in the street.

Among the latter was Major Sirr, who had received another stunning blow from Captain Rock at the first onset.

When the brutal major recovered his senses again he found himself disarmed in the grasp of the young Whiteboy, who held a pistol to his head, crying:

"Now you will meet your doom, you miserable dog."

And Captain Rock placed the weapon within an inch of the fellow's head.

Major Sirr was terribly frightened, but he soon recovered his courage and appealed to Lord Edward, crying:

"My lord, will you allow this wretch to murder me?"

The Irish leader smiled in a scornful manner, as he rejoined in ironical tones:

"You seem to forget, Major Sirr, that you fired your pistol point blank at me a few minutes ago. Have you been instructed to assassinate me?"

The brutal major quailed before the noble patriot, while Captain Rock cried:

"He fired straight at you, sir, and you would have been a dead man now if I had not struck up the pistol. Shooting is

too good for him. Let us hang him at the next lamp-post at once."

"Hang the rascally spy," yelled the patriots, as they made a rush for the trembling wretch.

They were dragging him toward a lamp-post, when the noble leader interposed, crying:

"No, no, my friends. We must not permit such an act at the outset of our career. Set the wretch free."

"But he is hounding you to death, my lord," protested Captain Rock.

"Let him hound away. Even to save my own life I would not have it said that we put the wretch to death when he was our prisoner. Release him, I command you."

Feeling assured that his friends would obey his command, Lord Edward hastened away with his devoted wife, who had taken an active part in the brief struggle.

The Irish leader knew that the English would soon rally in force, and he did not care to engage them again that night with the force then at his command.

As Lord Edward retired from the scene he gave orders for his followers to disperse, and Captain Rock soon found himself with only four of the rebels and the prisoner.

The bold Whiteboy would obey his leader, but he was also determined to punish the brutal spy before releasing him.

Brave Michael Dwyer was one of those who remained behind with Captain Rock, and the Wicklow mountaineer could see by the glance of the Whiteboy's eyes that he did not intend to let the spy off so readily.

Dragging Major Sirr along a narrow lane, Captain Rock whispered to Dwyer, saying:

"We will obey Lord Edward, but we will give this hound a dose he will never forget first. Pass the word around to the others and follow me."

Michael Dwyer did pass the word around, and they dragged the trembling spy along until they reached a secluded spot on the edge of a filthy pond.

Captain Rock and the others then proceeded to tie the prisoner's hands behind his back, putting a gag on his mouth at the same time.

Captain Rock then flung the brutal major on the ground and produced a heavy riding whip, as he cried:

"We will give the rascal the finest flogging he ever had in his life, and we will give him a dose in the dirty pond to heal his wounds."

The vigorous man then set to and lashed the bloodhound from head to foot, while he cried:

"That will teach the dog to hunt our brave leader down as he would a common thief. I was ordered to set him free, and we will do it; but nothing was said of giving him a good drubbing."

While the punishment was being thus inflicted on him Major Sirr groaned in agony and muttered fearful threats against Lord Edward and Captain Rock, as well as all those who were engaged with them.

Having lashed the wretch until he was black and blue, the Whiteboy and his friends then seized him and flung him into the slimy pond, dragging him out again only when he was nearly exhausted and half stifled.

Having thus punished the spy, Captain Rock and his friends left him on the edge of the pond to find his way to a shelter as best he could.

As the young Whiteboy retreated with Dwyer, he said to him, in ominous tones:

"I fear we will be sorry that we did not put an end to the wretch while we were about it, as something tells me that he will yet be the cause of great sorrow to us all."

"We had to obey orders," replied Dwyer, "and I am afraid Lord Edward will be very angry with us as it is."

"Then I will take all the blame."

Julia Barrington in her boyish disguise approached Captain Rock at the moment saying, in a low voice:

"I saw what you did to the rascal, Captain Rock, and I think you served him right. Lord Edward sent me back to look for you, as he wishes to see you to-night again."

The gallant Whiteboy took the young girl's arm within his own, and he led her away toward the retreat of their leader, saying:

"You are too venturesome by far, Julia. I saw you to-night in the middle of the fight, and you almost made a coward of me while watching you."

The young girl cast a loving glance up at her friend as she responded, with a smile:

"It would be impossible to make a coward of you, my brave captain, and I had my eye on you also during the fight. Oh, you should have seen how bravely his noble lady acted. She is a worthy wife of the brave Lord Edward."

"She is that, Julia; and I only hope that we will have a fair field to-morrow, or next day, and then we will show those English dogs again that we are equal for them man to man."

While Captain Rock and his dear companion were thus hastening to meet Lord Edward, the wretched spy had regained his feet, and he was dragging himself away from the pond, muttering in furious tones:

"May I die the death of a dog, if I am not soon revenged on the infernal rebels. It was Lord Edward who prompted the wretches to treat me in that manner, and I will hound him to death before he has time to take the field with his rebel crew. I will never rest until he dies, and I will strike the blow."

Major Sirr soon fell in with a party of English soldiers who were hastening from the castle to the late scene of action, and he soon procured a change of clothing as well as a stimulant to urge him on in pursuit of his prey.

Before the day dawned again Major Sirr was out in disguise and on the track of the patriot leader.

He tracked Lord Edward to a hotel in Dublin during the day, and he then hastened away to procure assistance in order to surround the place.

The good Lord Edward had faithful friends on the watch, however, and when the brutal major returned with a large force of soldiers Lord Edward had left the hotel in disguise.

Nothing daunted by his fresh failure, Major Sirr started out in search of the noble patriot again, and he tracked him that evening to the house of a friend who resided on Thomas street, and whose name was Nicholas Murphy.

Lord Edward was fearfully fatigued over his late exertions and he retired to rest at an early hour on that eventful night.

As he had taken more than ordinary precautions, and as his faithful friends were ever on the alert, the brave patriot did not dream of danger.

Not wishing to attract the attention of the ever-watchful spies Lady Fitzgerald had retired to a distant part of the city that night, as she was also weary from her late exertions with the patriots.

Captain Rock and Julia were out in the city early in the morning after the night's struggle.

The bold Whiteboy was disguised as a beggarman, and the young girl felt herself safe in her boyish attire.

Captain Rock was soon on the track of the tireless spy, and he was somewhat surprised to note that the rascal showed little or no signs of the treatment he had received from his hands on the night before.

It was Julia who warned Lord Edward to retreat from the hotel, and the young girl still kept on the track of the spy when the wretch traced Lord Edward to Thomas street that evening.

When the faithful girl saw the spy loitering around the

house where Lord Edward was resting, she was not quite certain that the wretch had discovered his hiding-place, but she hastened away to inform Captain Rock of her suspicions.

Julia was running along the dark street, all unconscious of any danger to herself, when she found herself suddenly seized by a pair of strong hands while a well-known voice hissed into her ears, saying:

"I got you again, my darling, and you will not escape me this time."

It was Colonel Tallon who had thus seized the brave girl, and three of his male servants sprang to his assistance at the same moment.

Before Julia could utter a cry a shawl was flung over her head and she was dragged to a close carriage by her captors, while Colonel Tallon said to her:

"I have been watching you for the last two hours, and your disguise couldn't baffle me. Now let us see if Captain Rock will release you again?"

One of the servants entered the carriage with Colonel Tallon and his prisoner, and they held her on the seat while the vehicle rattled away through the dark street.

The helpless girl groaned to herself when she found that she was a prisoner in the hands of her wicked cousin, but she was not thinking of her own trouble at the moment as she muttered in agony:

"Oh, who will warn the noble Lord Edward?"

Captain Rock was also on the track of Major Sirr about the same time, but the Whiteboy had stopped at a tavern in the neighborhood to consult with Michael Dwyer.

The two friends hastened out to watch the approaches to the house where Lord Edward was resting when they became alarmed by the tread of armed men hastening to the spot from all sides.

The two rebels then pushed on to give the alarm to Lord Edward or his friends, when they were suddenly forced back by the bayonets of the soldiers.

All the approaches to the house were guarded and the dwelling itself was surrounded on all sides by a powerful force under the command of Major Sirr.

Realizing that it would be impossible to force their way to the immediate assistance of Lord Edward, Captain Rock and Dwyer hastened away to rally his friends for a rescue.

In the meantime Lord Edward was sleeping calmly while the human bloodhounds were drawing around the house, and so quietly did Major Sirr move with his men that none of the inmates were warned of their approach.

While the treacherous spy thus approached his intended victim, he was careful to keep himself surrounded by the soldiers, as he was fearful of another surprise on the part of those who had defeated him on the previous night.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ATTACK ON LORD EDWARD.

The brave Irish leader was resting calmly after the fatigues of the previous night, when a crowd of his enemies burst into the bedroom and commenced to assail him with swords, guns, and pistols, without once calling on him to surrender, as it was their duty to do.

Realizing almost on the instant of awakening that his cowardly assailants intended to slay him on the spot, Lord Edward sprang from his bed and commenced a desperate resistance, intending to sell his life as dearly as possible.

The only weapon within the patriot's grasp was a dagger, which he always carried about him, and with that weapon the brave man struck out right and left, wounding several of his cowardly assailants.

The brutal soldiers then sprang into the room in overpowering numbers, hacking the brave man with their swords, while some of them endeavored to bear him to the floor and overpower him.

The desperate struggle was kept on for fully ten minutes, Lord Edward, using his dagger with fearful effect as he struggled like a wild animal at bay to hurl his enemies aside and reach the staircase outside.

The brave man did succeed in reaching the door, while the brutal soldiers clung to him by the arms and legs like so many bulldogs, striving the while to force him to the floor and finish their work.

While this terrible work was going on Major SIRR kept outside on the landing watching his opportunity to carry out his threats against the Irish leader.

Lord Edward had succeeded in hurling some of his assailants aside, when the brutal major took aim with his pistol and fired.

The weapon was loaded with two balls, and they both took effect in the hero's shoulder, yet he continued to struggle, like a wounded boar at bay, until he was knocked insensible beneath the clubbed muskets of his assailants.

When the insensible hero was thus lying at the mercy of his assailants, and being urged on by Major SIRR, who still feared to approach the wounded man, a brutal drummer gave him a cruel stab in the neck with a bayonet.

On being assured that his victim was helpless and dying, Major SIRR approached the prostrate man, crying:

"Miserable rebel, I swore I would have your life, and I have kept my oath. Thus perish all the Irish enemies of the king!"

The heroic Irish leader gave no sign of life, but the vital spark had not fled.

While the fearful struggle was going on, the English troops continued to flock to the adjoining streets until a full army was massed in the neighborhood of the house where Lord Edward was lying.

Major SIRR would have made certain of Lord Edward's death if a merciful officer had not appeared and ordered the wounded man to be borne to prison.

The rebels of Dublin were rallying in the meantime, and several desperate charges were made by them on the soldiers.

But all the efforts of the patriots to rescue the dying man were in vain, and he was taken from the house and carried to prison surrounded by an immense body of troops.

Captain Rock was foremost in the charges made on the troops, forgetting all about Julia in the excitement of the moment.

When Lord Edward was lodged in the strong prison, where a large body of troops still kept guard over him, the patriots dispersed for the night, having resolved to attempt the rescue of their leader should he survive his terrible wounds.

Captain Rock then sought Julia, and when he could not find her, he became fearful that the brave girl had fallen in the struggles with the soldiers.

While thus engaged the Whiteboy met Michael Dwyer, who informed him that Colonel Tallon had escaped from the mountain on the previous night and that he was then in Dublin and acting with Major SIRR.

Being still disguised as a beggarman, Captain Rock started out with Dwyer in search of Julia or of Colonel Tallon, as the Whiteboy felt assured that the unprincipled officer had something to do with the young girl's disappearance.

The two friends soon learned that Colonel Tallon owned an old mansion in the suburbs of the city, and they hastened to be close to the cottage where Lady Fitzgerald had sought refuge for the night.

The news of the arrest of the brave Lord Edward soon spread all over the city and the neighborhood, but very few

had yet learned of the brutal manner in which he had been treated by his captors.

As Captain Rock and Michael Dwyer were hastening along they encountered a young man whose frantic actions attracted their attention on the instant.

On drawing closer the young man Captain Rock at once recognized him.

It was poor Lady Fitzgerald, who had just heard of the arrest of her husband, and who was then hastening to the city to learn the full particulars.

The Whiteboy stopped the lady on the instant, saying:

"My dear sir, if you will take the advice of a friend you will not go into the city at present."

The devoted woman recognized Captain Rock, and a deep sigh escaped from her as she asked:

"Is it true that he has been arrested?"

"It is too true, noble sir; but do not despair, as there are brave hearts who are pledged to rescue him ere long. If you will but take the advice of a devoted friend you will return to your home, as the bloodhounds are out in the city, and they would not hesitate in consigning you to a dungeon also."

The afflicted lady did not know that her brave husband was then in a dying state, and Captain Rock prevailed upon her to return to the cottage for the night.

While they were walking back the road together, Julia's name was mentioned, and Captain Rock then told of her strange disappearance.

Forgetting her own grave trial for the moment, the noble wife became deeply interested in the fate of her late companion, and she said:

"Colonel Tallon's house is just up the road, and my friends at the cottage informed me that he arrived there to-night in a carriage. I was somewhat surprised on hearing it, as I believed he was still a prisoner on the mountain where we left him."

The information thus received was sufficient for Captain Rock and his friend.

Having escorted Lady Fitzgerald to the cottage, and having assured her that every effort would be made for the rescue of Lord Edward, they hastened toward the old mansion where Julia was held a prisoner.

On passing along the road Captain Rock could perceive that several dragoons were quartered in the old mansion, and that four of them were stationed as sentinels around the place.

The presence of the armed men did not discourage Captain Rock and his companion, and after a brief consultation, they made up their minds to enter the old mansion at all hazards and attempt the rescue of the brave girl.

When Julia was first captured all her thoughts were centered on Lord Edward, and she bitterly bemoaned her fate in not being able to inform him that the brutal spy was again on his track.

While they were bearing her along in the carriage through the city, the devoted girl consoled herself with the hope that Captain Rock and other friends would be on the alert against the spies, and that they would give Lord Edward timely notice of their approach.

On reaching the old mansion Julia found herself in a place that was quite familiar to her, as she had often stopped there during her early visits to the city.

On entering the house Colonel Tallon led the young girl up to a room on the second floor, and he then gave orders that a supper should be prepared as soon as possible.

As Julia did not despair of again escaping from the power of her designing cousin, she did not assume an injured air with the wretch, but contented herself with teasing him in the coldest manner.

While they were waiting for the meal Colonel Tallon joked the young girl about her disguise, saying:

"What has come over you, young lady, that you must wander around Dublin in that trim? Indeed, I think you are a fit subject for a madhouse."

The young girl cast a scornful glance on the officer as she replied:

"You have persecuted me enough to drive me mad, but I hope to survive all my trials and live to see you sorely punished yet."

A scornful laugh burst from Colonel Tallon, and he sneeringly asked:

"Do you expect Captain Rock to rescue you again?"

"I do. Cunning as you have been, I will wager my life that my brave friend will discover where I am to-night and rescue me before morning."

Another scornful laugh burst from the officer, and he replied:

"And I will wager my life the infernal rebel and all his friends will be arrested or slain before morning, as I am certain that Major Sirr was on the track of the rebel leader to-night."

"Then it is your place to be with the spy, as such work is more fitting for you than kidnapping young ladies."

Julia then turned away in disgust and refused to hold further conversation with the wretch.

The young girl did not refuse to partake of the supper placed before her, however, as she felt that it would be well to nourish all her strength and courage for the trials before her.

Soon after supper was over Colonel Tallon entered the room and approached Julia with a triumphant air, saying:

"I am happy to inform you that Lord Edward Fitzgerald has been wounded and captured, and all his vile crew have been slain or dispersed."

Julia shuddered as she looked up at her cousin's face, for she felt that the wretch was telling the truth.

Giving vent to another mocking laugh of triumph, Colonel Tallon continued:

"The great rebellion is over now, your friends are killed or scattered, and you must become my wife."

Julia sprang from the chair and confronted the man with flashing eyes, and she exclaimed:

"I will die ere I become your wife. Something whispers to me that Captain Rock is not dead yet, and I warn you to beware of him."

"That is nonsense, Julia. If the fellow should be alive, what have I to fear from a miserable rebel who would be compelled to fly for his life?"

"You were in his power before," responded the brave girl, "and he would have put you to death, as you deserve, if I had not pleaded for you. Beware, Colonel Tallon, as I tell you that Captain Rock has a long account to settle with you, and I will not plead for you again."

"I defy the rebel dog, and I will soon have the pleasure of seeing him swinging on the gallows. You say he has a long account to settle with me, girl. Who is the wretch, I ask you?"

Before Julia could reply a heavy hand was laid on Colonel Tallon's shoulder, and he felt the cold barrel of a pistol at the side of his head at the same moment, while a harsh voice hissed into his ear:

"I will answer that question, Colonel Tallon. Raise a single cry of alarm, and it will be the last you will ever utter."

A low and joyous exclamation burst from Julia as she recognized the intruder, who was no other than Captain Rock, in the disguise of a beggar.

Colonel Tallon recognized the voice of his enemy, also, and his limbs trembled beneath him, as he faltered forth:

"Don't murder me, Captain Rock, as I have a troop of dra-

goons in the house, and a shot would be a signal for your own destruction."

Another pair of hands grasped the officer from behind at the moment, while Captain Rock confronted him with the pistol, saying:

"We are prepared to risk an encounter with your dragoons, but be assured that you will be the first to suffer. Do you wish to know who I am?"

The officer stared at the Whiteboy, and his face grew paler still as he fancied he recognized a voice that was familiar to him in other days, while he gasped forth:

"Who are you?"

The young Whiteboy drew the rough beard from his face, and presented a countenance that was well known to Colonel Tallon, as he demanded:

"Do you know me now?"

The officer staggered back, and he would have fallen on the floor if Michael Dwyer had not upheld him, while he gasped forth:

"'Tis Richard Byrne!"

The young Whiteboy cast a hateful glance at his enemy, still holding the pistol pointed at his head as he responded:

"Yes, I am Richard Byrne, your half brother. I am the son of the man who married your mother, and whom you hunted to a felon's death, so that you could claim his property. I am here now to avenge my wrongs."

Colonel Tallon trembled the more, and he cast an appealing glance on Julia, as he muttered aloud:

"I was certain that he died in France."

"I did not die in France, although I was reported dead on the field of battle. I am here in Ireland now, to strike for freedom and for vengeance. I would have spared you, you contemptible wretch, for the sake of my mother's memory, were it not for this last attempt against your good cousin here. Now you must die."

As Colonel Tallon stared at the stern face of the young man he had injured so much, a deadly fear came over him, and he gasped forth again:

"Would you murder your own brother in cold blood?"

"You are no brother of mine, hound. Did you not hunt my own father to death? Would you not consign me to the gallows to-morrow if you had the chance? You will die ere I leave this house, and I will bear the young lady away in spite of all your dragoons."

Another fearful groan escaped from the terrified wretch, and he cast an imploring glance on Julia, as he said:

"Oh, cousin, cousin, do plead for me. If he will but spare my life now, I swear that I will never trouble him or you again."

Julia was about to reply when a loud knock was heard at the door, and Colonel Tallon cried out in exultant tones:

"I am saved now!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE MANSION.

When the loud knock was heard at the door of the room where Captain Rock was confronting his unnatural brother, the latter had only time to utter the single exclamation ere Michael Dwyer felled him to the floor.

The ready-witted girl then sprang to the door, casting a warning glance at her two friends as she demanded of the person outside:

"What is wanted out there?"

Before Julia could receive an answer she turned the key in the door and turned her back to it to watch her friends dealing with Colonel Tallon.

Captain Rock and Dwyer were then in the act of binding and gagging the prisoner, and the gruff voice outside the door cried out:

"I am Major Sirr, and I want to see Colonel Tallon on important business."

Julia trembled a little on hearing the voice of the brutal spy, but she answered in firm tones:

"Colonel Tallon is asleep and he cannot be seen at present."

Captain Rock and Dwyer were then dragging their prisoner into an inner room, and the former motioned to Julia to hold the door as long as possible.

Major Sirr was silent for a few moments, and then raised his gruff voice as he demanded:

"Who are you in there?"

"I am Colonel Tallon's cousin."

"Are you Miss Julia Barrington?"

"I am, sir."

The inhuman spy was silent again, and Captain Rock hastened to Julia's side as he whispered to her:

"Keep him outside a few moments and all will be well."

The young girl could then see that her Whiteboy friend had put on the colonel's regimental coat, and that he was hastening to make preparations to represent the officer himself in case of need.

Major Sirr then knocked at the door again as he cried out:

"I must see Colonel Tallon, young lady, as I have very important business with him."

"But I tell you he is asleep, and he told me he must not be disturbed, as he is very weary."

"But I must see him, as I am on the king's business, and I cannot be put off."

As the brutal major spoke he attempted to force in the door, while Julia cried out:

"Break in the door if you like, Major Sirr, but you will have to answer to Colonel Tallon for the outrage."

The young girl turned her head again at the moment, and she was a little startled by what she saw.

Captain Rock had succeeded in altering his appearance so as to present an excellent resemblance of his half-brother, and he was then in the act of reclining on a sofa as he motioned to the young girl to retire from the door.

It will be remembered that Julia was still in the boyish attire, as she had not been able to procure more suitable garments since her capture.

On receiving the hint the young girl sprang toward the inner room as she cried out to Major Sirr:

"Break in the door if you like, and then you will have to answer for it to Colonel Tallon."

Although the suspicious major had heard of the capture of the young lady he could not understand why Colonel Tallon had fallen asleep at such an early hour, and while important events were transpiring in the city.

Knowing full well that Miss Barrington was not partial to her cousin, Major Sirr suspected that she had drugged her admirer after supper with the view of escaping from the mansion.

Calling one of the officers in the mansion, who happened to be no other than Captain Graham, they held a hurried consultation, and then it was agreed to burst in the door.

The door was then burst in with as little noise as possible, and Major Sirr entered the room and advanced to the sofa, while Captain Graham remained outside.

A single candle was burning on the mantelpiece, and by its light the major could see the stout form of the pretended colonel reclining on the sofa as if in deep slumber.

After casting one glance around as if in search of the young lady, Major Sirr advanced hastily and shook the sleeper with no gentle hand as he yelled into his ear:

"Arouse, Colonel Tallon, as I fear that there is mischief on foot around here."

The pretended colonel awoke with a start, and he rubbed his eyes a moment as he demanded:

"What is the row now, Major Sirr?"

Julia Barrington heard that voice as she stood with Dwyer over the prisoner in the inner room, and her heart bounded with joy while she whispered to the mountaineer:

"Isn't that perfect?"

"It couldn't be better, miss," answered Dwyer. "He'll humbug them nicely, never fear."

Major Sirr did not look very intently at the face of the aroused sleeper as he answered the question put to him, saying:

"The trouble is this, Colonel Tallon. I came here in haste to consult with you on an important matter, and I find you sound asleep at this early hour."

The pretended colonel rubbed his eyes again, as he demanded:

"What is there very strange in a gentleman taking a short nap after supper, major? Where is Miss Barrington?"

The disguised Whiteboy gazed around the dimly-lighted room, and raised his voice aloud as he spoke, while Major Sirr responded with a sneer:

"The young lady was here a few moments ago, but I fancy she has given you leg bail by this time."

As if to give the lie to the surmise, Julia appeared from the inner room at the moment, and answered:

"Did you call me, Colonel Tallon?"

"Yes, I did, cousin. Major Sirr here would insinuate that you ran away from me."

The brutal major started a little on seeing the young girl in her boyish attire, while the man on the sofa chuckled to himself, and then cried aloud:

"You see the young lady has no thought of running away from me, Major Sirr. Now what is your important business with me to-night?"

As the disguised Whiteboy asked the question he motioned to Julia to retire again, and he raised himself to a sitting position on the sofa.

Major Sirr took a chair at his side, as he replied:

"I presume you are aware, colonel, that Lord Edward has been captured after a desperate struggle and that he is now dying in prison?"

"I was so informed, major."

The brutal spy gave a grim smile, as he continued, saying:

"I have also to inform you that I am now on the track of two other rascally rebel leaders whom I hope to string up by the neck in the morning."

"To whom do you allude, major?"

"I allude to two particular friends of yours, known as Captain Rock and Michael Dwyer. My spies have tracked them out to this very spot."

The disguised Whiteboy pretended to be very much surprised, and he exclaimed:

"The mischief you say, major! Then the rascals must be out here to try to rescue Miss Barrington again."

Another grim smile passed over the major's face as he responded:

"That is just what they are out here after, and we will catch the dogs in a nice trap. Oh, if I catch them I'll make them suffer for their treatment of me. I will cut the very flesh off their backs, and I will have them hung on the gallows at the dawn of day."

The disguised Whiteboy chuckled to himself as he remarked:

"I understand that they did give you an awful mauling last

night, major, and I can see the marks of the whip on your face now."

A terrible scowl appeared on the face of the brutal spy and a fierce imprecation burst from his lips ere he responded:

"'Tis true, they did give me an awful mauling, but I had some satisfaction for it this evening. The rebel leader received his death wound at my hands, and his miserable tools will die the death of dogs ere morning. We must now take precautions for capturing those two rascals, as I am certain they will attempt to enter this house ere long."

The disguised Whiteboy was tempted to slay the assassin on the instant, but he reflected that the act would bring destruction on Dwyer as well as himself, and he controlled himself as he mentally exclaimed:

"Oh, how I long to punish this hound, but I must have patience for the present."

He then addressed Major Sirr, saying:

"I have taken all due precautions. Did you not see the sentinels posted outside?"

"But that will not do. Is it likely that the cunning rebels will venture to approach the house, colonel, while they see it guarded as it is? I would suggest that the sentinels be called in and then dismissed to the barracks. You have sufficient force inside the house now to crush the rascals when they come."

The disguised Whiteboy acted on the suggestion on the instant, and Captain Graham was ordered to call in the sentinels and then dismiss them to the barracks.

When the two men were left alone again Major Sirr addressed the pretended colonel, saying:

"May I ask how it is that the young lady is in such a novel garb at present?"

"Certainly, major. Miss Barrington was anxious to see a little life in Dublin, and she joined the rebels in that disguise. I chanced to meet her, and I at once took charge of her as a relative and guardian."

As the major knew that Julia disliked the colonel very much, while he also had a suspicion that she was attached to the young Whiteboy, he ventured to inquire:

"Are you not afraid, colonel, that the young lady will run away from you again?"

"There is no danger of that now, as she has consented to be my wife. Help yourself to the brandy, Major Sirr."

The major did help himself to the brandy, while Captain Rock was forming a plan for their escape from the mansion.

He knew that it would be an easy matter to make an excuse and get away with Julia, but it would not be so easy to dispose of Michael Dwyer in safety.

To be sure they had managed to enter the house by crawling along the shrubbery and by stealing through the kitchen door at the rear.

As the young Whiteboy had resided in the house when he was a boy, he was acquainted with every turn in it, and he managed to lead Michael Dwyer up to the colonel's dining room without being observed by the soldiers stationed in the house.

But could the bold mountaineer find his way out again without the assistance of his friend?

The presence of the watchful spy in the house added to the risk of such a movement, and Captain Rock was now striving to devise a plan for getting rid of Major Sirr at once and forever.

Captain Rock now felt that he would have very little trouble in deceiving the keen-eyed spy at night and in the dimly-lighted room, but he did apprehend exposure if a better inspection of his countenance offered.

Major Sirr was not backward in helping himself to the brandy, although the liquor did not seem to have much effect on the brain of the rough brute.

As Captain Rock watched the wretch who had so treacherously assaulted his beloved leader, he said to himself:

"Oh, would that I had some of the sleeping drug to put in the brandy for the scoundrel; but I will not leave him to-night until I have avenged Lord Edward."

The young Whiteboy had just succeeded in forming a plan for the escape of Michael Dwyer by disguising himself as a dragoon when he heard a slight commotion in the other room and a muffled voice fell on their ears, crying:

"Treason! Help, help!"

Drawing a pistol on the instant, Major Sirr sprang toward the inner room, crying:

"What does this mean?"

Captain Rock was on his feet also, and before the brutal major could reach the door he seized him by the back of the neck and flung him against the wall with great force, striking him a blow under the ear at the same moment, as he hissed forth:

"We will settle you anyway, you infernal hound."

The rude blow under the ear dazed the major for the moment, and he sank on the floor uttering a faint cry of alarm.

Before he could recover his senses, Captain Rock dealt him several severe blows with the barrel of his pistol, while Julia ran out of the inner room and whispered into the Whiteboy's ear:

"Dwyer has secured the colonel again."

At that moment Captain Graham entered the dining room, and a surprised cry burst from his lips as he beheld the pretended colonel standing over the insensible major.

The ready-witted Whiteboy was prepared for the emergency, however, and he turned to the officer as he cried in highly indignant tones:

"That insolent puppy dared to insult Miss Barrington, and I knocked him down with my pistol."

Captain Graham cast an angry glance at the insensible man, as he cried:

"You should have shot him, colonel."

"'Pon my honor I think I have finished the fellow, but my cousin here will bear witness that he deserved death at my hands."

Julia's eyes flashed with indignation also as she cried:

"The wretch deserves a hundred deaths, as he insulted me in the grossest manner."

Captain Graham cast an admiring glance on the young lady and then turned to his superior officer as he asked:

"Is he really dead?"

"I fear he is. But it would be just as well to send away for a surgeon."

Captain Graham was hastening out of the room when his commander stopped him, saying:

"Do not mention this affair to any one, captain, but simply summon a surgeon in haste."

When the captain left the room Captain Rock stooped down to examine his victim as he said to Julia:

"Would that I slew the wretch in a fair encounter, but he boasted to-night that he gave the noble Lord Edward his death wound."

The patriot stared down at the inhuman spy with a shudder as she replied:

"The dog deserved a more terrible death, but let us not think of him now, dear friend."

Captain Rock sprang up from the side of the insensible man, saying:

"Yes, he is dead; and we must now think of our own safety. Let us go in to Dwyer."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STRUGGLE OUTSIDE THE CITY.

Michael Dwyer was keeping guard over Colonel Tallon when Julia and the Whiteboy entered the room.

The mountaineer had the prisoner stretched on the floor with one knee on his breast and a pistol pointed at his head, as he said to Captain Rock:

"He slipped the gag from his mouth somehow awhile ago, and I had to give him a stunning crack to silence him again, as you can see, captain."

The Whiteboy cast a fierce glance at his half-brother as he rejoined:

"It would be but right to silence him forever, but I cannot bring myself to do it."

Julia drew Captain Rock away as she said:

"Not even to save our own lives must you have his blood on your hands. Let us secure him well and then hasten to escape from here."

Colonel Tallon was not insensible at the moment, but the gag on his mouth prevented him from uttering a word.

The two men proceeded to bind his arms and legs in the most thorough manner, and they also secured the gag in such a way that it would be almost impossible for him to remove it for some time.

Having thrust the prisoner into a large closet and closing the door on him, the three friends held a hurried consultation as to their escape.

Major Sirr still lay as quietly as if sleeping the sleep of death, yet the venomous wretch was not put out of the way forever.

Deeming it necessary to hasten away from the house before the surgeon arrived, Michael Dwyer resolved to venture out by one of the side windows and await his friend on the road.

The bold mountaineer did gain the lawu in safety, and when Captain Rock heard his signal outside he went to the door of the outer apartment and called to one of the dragoons on duty below, saying:

"Have the close carriage brought around to the front door as soon as possible, as I wish to go into the city with the young lady prisoner. I will not require any guards for the short journey."

The carriage was brought around from the stable, and the disguised Whiteboy then led Julia down by a private stairway as he whispered to her:

"Let us but reach the road and we are safe."

They did reach the road in safety, and they were driving along toward the city when a man sprang out before the horses and pointed a pistol at the driver's head as he cried:

"Get down out of there as quick as you can, or I will stretch you out on the roadside!"

Fearing that he was assailed by Captain Freeney, the famous highway robber, the driver sprang down from his seat and darted into a field as fast as he could, while he said to himself:

"The devil's cure to the colonel if he does get robbed, as he is ill-using the young lady."

Michael Dwyer sprang up on the driver's seat, seized the reins and started the horses, as he turned to the carriage window saying:

"That was well done, captain. Now we will off to the mountain and laugh at the English dogs."

The carriage was turning into a side road leading up to the Wicklow Mountains, when a bugle blast was heard behind them, followed by cries and the tramping of horses.

Michael Dwyer lashed the horses under him as he turned to his friends inside, saying:

"The hue and cry is out after us again, captain, but I think we can laugh at them yet."

"The colonel must have escaped from the closet," replied Captain Rock. "Lash the horses to their best and we may gain the mountain ahead of them."

Michael Dwyer did lash the horses to their very best, while on after them thundered over thirty dragoons at the fastest pace their horses would bear them.

The coach horses before the carriage were splendid animals, but they could not keep ahead of the dragoons while dragging the heavy vehicle over the rocky road, which was becoming rougher and rougher as they advanced toward the mountain.

Force them as he would, the pursuing dragoons drew nearer and nearer, and Captain Rock and his friends could soon distinguish the voice of Colonel Tallon, as it rang out above the others, crying:

"Spur on, spur on, and we have got the rascals. Charge on them without firing, and give the two rebel dogs the cold steel. Be careful of the lady in the struggle."

Captain Rock looked out of the window from the carriage and he could see that his half brother was leading in the headlong chase.

Drawing his large pistol he took aim at the rider, when Julia laid her hand on his arm saying:

"For mercy sake, do not kill him if you can help it."

Captain Rock lowered the weapon as he replied:

"I was only going to shoot the horse, but I will not fire at all if it can be helped."

Dwyer drew his weapon at the same time and pointed it at the advancing rider as he cried:

"I'll put a stop to you, anyhow."

The bold rebel fired on the instant, and Colonel Tallon flung up his hands, gave a cry of agony, and fell from his steed a moment after.

The charger then dashed on, and he was soon beside the carriage, when Captain Rock sprang out and seized the bridle, firing his pistol at the foremost dragoons as he cried to Michael Dwyer:

"Cut the traces and we will mount the horses for it."

Julia sprang out after her Whiteboy friend, who lifted her on Colonel Tallon's horse as he said:

"Away with you as fast as you can."

The young girl did dash away up the road crying:

"Fly—fly, friends!"

The bullet from Captain Rock's pistol had struck the horse of the foremost dragoon, and he fell in the centre of the narrow road, bearing his rider down with him.

The others were dashing along as if engaged in a hunt after a fox, riding according to the speed of their steeds, and without any attempt at keeping in line.

When Colonel Tallon and his foremost dragoon fell on the road, Captain Rock and his friend hastened to fire again, and two more of the foremost horsemen were borne to the ground.

The fall of the foremost pursuers caused the others to draw up a little, and the two rebels sprang on the coach horses and faced them up toward the mountain.

Then another well-known voice rang out from the pursuers, crying:

"Spur on after the rebel dogs, and fire as you ride!"

The fugitives recognized that voice, and Captain Rock turned to his friends, saying:

"Thunder and lightning, that is Major Sirr! The infernal scoundrel has more lives than a dozen cats."

Michael Dwyer cast his eyes back as he replied:

"The villain takes good care to keep some of the others ahead of him for all that. If we can only entice them up the mountain, some of my lads will be on the alert, and we will give them another dose."

The good coach horses were making splendid time for their riders, and they were gradually gaining on the pursuers.

Julia rode along ahead for some distance, and she then pulled up her steed, until the others were beside her, when she cried out:

"Is it possible that that was Major SIRR's voice that I heard?"

"Yes, it was," answered Captain Rock. "I could have sworn the scoundrel was stone dead."

They were then out of pistol range of the dragoons, who still kept on the pursuit, while Major SIRR urged them forward, crying:

"A hundred pounds for the rebels dead or alive, spur on after the rascals."

The fugitives were soon galloping up the mountain road, and they did not ascend very far when Michael Dwyer sent forth a cry resembling that of a startled owl.

After riding a short distance a similar cry was heard from above, and then Michael Dwyer turned to his friends, saying:

"Some of my boys are out, and we will give the rascals behind us a good dose if they venture much farther."

Captain Rock looked back as he replied:

"I could sleep easy on a hard rock to-night if we could only manage to slay the infamous Major SIRR. The cowardly rascals are retreating now."

The pursuers had halted on the mountainside as if fearing to advance into a trap.

Major SIRR was not a coward, but he knew that the mountain was infested by rebels, and he was also aware that the dragoons would stand very little chance in a contest with them in the rugged pass.

After consulting with the senior officer, they concluded to beat a retreat back to the city and bear their dead and wounded with them.

When they returned to the spot where their comrades had fallen they found that Colonel Tallon had received a wound from which he would never recover.

The wicked soldier would never trouble Julia again.

Captain Graham had also received the reward of his treachery to the young girl, as one of the bullets fired by the rebels had pierced his brain.

The two other dragoons had received serious wounds, but they were not mortal.

The hunted rebels found a safe shelter in the mountain that night, and on the following day Julia Barrington became the wife of Captain Rock.

On the second night after his wedding, Captain Rock returned to the city in disguise, accompanied by Michael Dwyer.

The noble Lord Edward was still lying in prison suffering fearful agony from his numerous wounds, and there was little or no hope of his recovery.

Yet the patriots of the country, hoping almost against hope, were plotting for his rescue, believing that he would live to lead them to victory.

During the two weeks that followed several daring attempts were made on the strong prison, but the English government had collected a large force of soldiers in the city, and the efforts of the patriots were without avail.

The murdered martyr breathed his last inside of the English prison walls at the end of fourteen days of extreme suffering, and his noble wife returned to her native country to deplore his death while she lived.

The death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald was a cruel blow to the Irish patriots, who soon after broke out in rebellion in the neighboring counties.

Every effort was made to slay the infamous Major SIRR, but that inhuman assassin was smuggled out of Ireland in disguise, and he found refuge by living in seclusion in his own country.

The infamous spy lived a wretched life for some years, and it is recorded that he died at length while suffering from delirium tremens.

Captain Rock and his brave band joined the rebel army fighting in Wexford, and the gallant Whiteboy played a brilliant part in the glorious but unequal struggle that followed soon after.

When the struggle was over and the brave patriots were dispersed or slain by the almost countless hosts of England, Captain Rock escaped to France with his young bride.

Michael Dwyer took part in the struggle also, and he continued to hold his own in his native mountain until a few years after, when the brave Robert Emmet again raised the standard of rebellion.

When the last struggle was over the bold mountaineer escaped to Australia, where he lived to a good old age, and praying to the end that he would have another chance to strike a blow at the English tyrants.

Some ten years after the close of the rebellion the famous Captain Rock appeared in Ireland again at the head of another band of Whiteboys.

While he did not attempt an open warfare against the English soldiers he raided the tyrant landlords' and magistrates' estates, and he soon became the terror of all the tyrants around Wexford.

From that time up to the present day other Captain Rocks have appeared in various parts of Ireland, but the original Whiteboy was the brave young man who had guided Lord Edward Fitzgerald through the English lines on his last trip to Dublin.

THE END.

Read "A SHEET OF BLOTTING PAPER; OR, THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG INVENTOR," by Richard R. Montgomery, which will be the next number (145) of "Pluck and Luck."

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